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2D Artist

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ARTICLES
The Sketchbook of James Wolf Strehle

INTERVIEWS
Tim Wamock , Eric Wilkerson and Daniel Ljunggren

GALLERIES
Andreas Rocha , Diane Özdamar, Chuck Wadey, plus more!

MAKING OF'S
Project Overview of Cathédrale by Aziz Maaqoul

TUTORIALS
Part 2 of our Matte Painting series by Tiberius Viris, plus more!



EDITORIAL

Welcome to **ISSUE 027!** Well, Spring is just around the corner now, as is Easter and a time for chocolate-filled bellies and over-indulgence. So, in order to tempt us away from the chocolatey-egg "goodness" that seems to be *everywhere* right now, let's get into some serious CG-ing and feed our cravings for beautiful imagery, instead! And as Spring is a time for new-born creatures – both great and small – we thought, what better time to introduce Mike Corriero's fantastic new in-depth tutorial on Creature Concept Design?! Well, there isn't a better time than now really, so flick to **PAGE 105** for the first instalment of this six-part series, where Mike gives us a foundation lesson upon which to build our understanding of Creature Design for the coming months! Stay-tuned also for next month's issue as Mike will take us further and deeper into the world of creature concept design, and hopefully a new talent for creature creation will be born in us all! To give you a little taster for Mike's work, check out this month's Speed Painting on **PAGE 87** where Mike tackles the brief, along with our in-house artist, Richard Tilbury, "The beast was poised ready to strike!" (Gulp!!) As usual, our artists have interpreted the brief *very* differently this month and the contrast between the two is fantastic (we love it when that happens!). This month's interview line-up welcomes back Matte Painter and Concept Artist, Tim Warnock, who you may remember from the very first issue of 2DArtist magazine! See **PAGE 031** for a catch-up interview with the talented Tim, and don't miss our strikingly contrasted interviews this month with the "tradigital" Painter and Illustrator Eric Wilkerson, and Concept and 3d Artist Daniel Ljunggren, keeping the variety right up there for you! If you're a budding Matte Painter and are following our Matte Painting tutorial series, then don't miss Part Two on **PAGE 097** this month where Tiberius teaches us how to apply a touch of Jack Frost to a summery scene... This is, errr, not quite so Spring-like (uh-hum), but fun and challenging all the same, so get yourself stuck in and don't forget to send us examples of your work as we'd love to see what you're all up to! **AND DON'T FORGET TO ENJOY YOURSELVES!** **Ed.**

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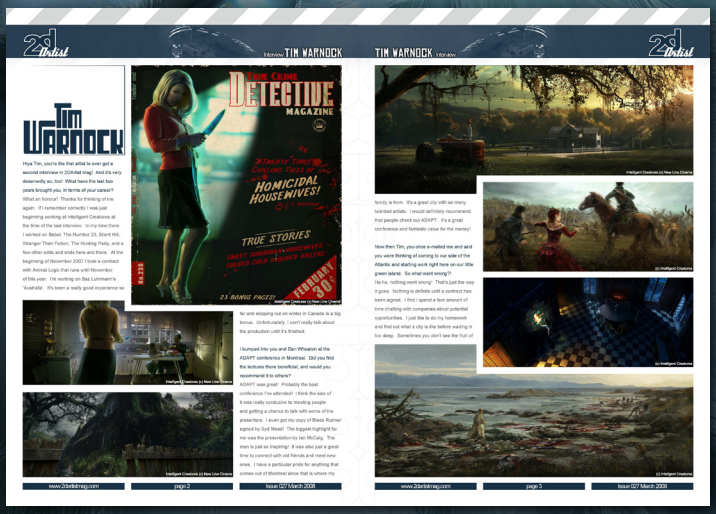
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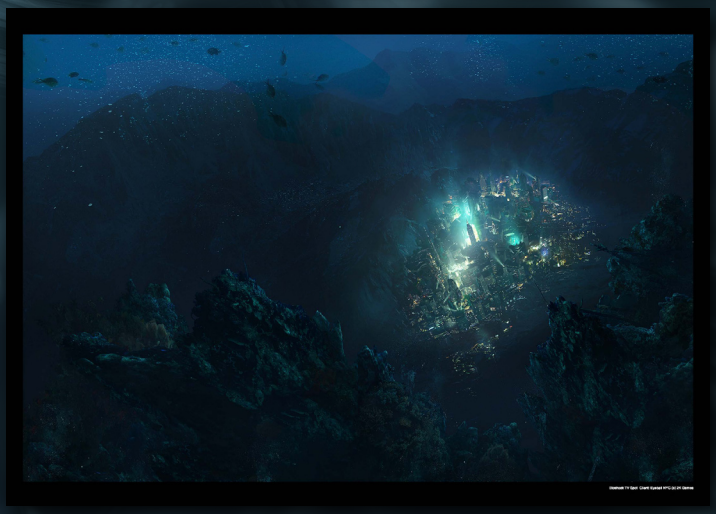
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CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

Every month, many creatives and artists around the world contribute to 3DCreative & 2DArtist magazines. Here you can read all about them. If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist magazines, please contact lynette@zoopublishing.com





Richard Tilbury

has had a passion for drawing since being a couple of feet tall. He studied Fine Art & was eventually led into the realm of computers several years ago. His brushes have slowly been dissolving in white spirit since the late nineties & now, alas, his graphics tablet has become their successor. He still sketches regularly & now balances his time between 2d & 3d, although drawing will always be closest to his heart!

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Tim Warnock

is currently working as a Senior Matte Painter/Concept Artist for Animal Logic in Sydney, Australia. Prior to moving to Sydney, Tim spent 2 years at Intelligent Creatures in Toronto, where he worked on a number of feature films, which include The Hunting Party, The Number 23, Bable and Silent Hill.

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Daniel Ljunggren



works as a Concept Artist and 3d Artist at Avalanche Studios, in Sweden. He has been working in the games industry for about seven years and enjoys it now more than ever. Daniel prefers creating paintings that are fictional and that will trigger the viewers' imaginations.

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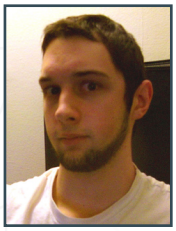


(c) Intelligent Creatures

Image by Tim Warnock



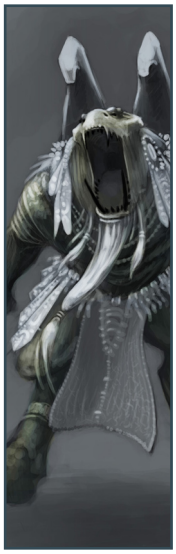
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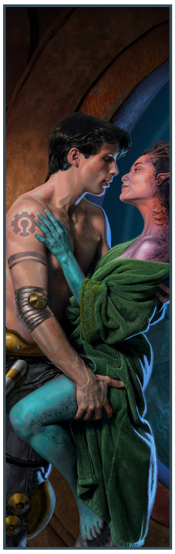


James Wolf Strehle

is a passionate and dedicated freelance Illustrator fresh out of the Art institute of Boston. Although he is young, he has already began making his mark in the art world. He hopes to one day work as a concept artist in a high profile studio, but for the time being he is quite comfortable working freelance, ready to take on anything and everything that comes his way!

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Eric Wilkerson



is an award-winning Painter & Illustrator, living in the New York, Hudson Valley. He has worked in publishing, logo/concept design for feature films, and various television commercial projects. His work has been included in Spectrum: the Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art Vol. 9 and 12, Expose 1, and most recently Digital Art Masters Vol. 1 from 3DTotal. He also has an unhealthy addiction to Star Trek.

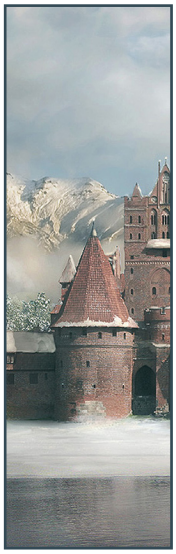
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Tiberius Viris

is currently working as a Freelance Matte Painter/CG Artist for both the feature film and games industries, and also as an Environment Illustrator for various projects and clients. His work has also been featured in several prestigious books, such as Expose 5 and D'Artiste Matte Painting 2.

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Mike Corriero



currently produces assets as a freelance Artist for various companies including everything from creatures, environments, structures, illustrations and icons. His work has been featured in a number of promotional outlets, including ImagineFX, Ballistic Publishing's Expose 4 and 5 and Painter Books, Corel Painter X and Design 360 (China). His client list includes Radical Entertainment, ImagineFX and Liquid Development.

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Aziz Maaqoul

After a course in Fine Art, Aziz studied at the Casablanca School of Arts. His career began at Casapremiere, followed by a year at KNRG Saatchi & Saatchi as a Graphic Designer/Story-Boarder. He spent 2 years as a cartoonist at Leo Burnett, moved to Ubisoft as a story-boarder, and then worked freelance in graphic illustration and matte painting for a while. He currently works at Sigma Technologies as a Matte Painter. http://www.maaqoul.com
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Patri Balanovsky



is a Production/Concept Artist at PitchiPoy Animation Studios, Tel-Aviv, in Israel. He's been drawing & painting since he can remember; creating characters, creatures & fantastic scenes has always been a passion of his. Telling a whole story through a single image can be quite a challenge, but he's always up for it! Keeping his work fresh & versatile, he explores all sorts of genres, styles & attitudes.
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lives in Singapore and graduated from Nanyang Polytechnic, Digital Media Design, where he specialised in Game Design. He's currently working on the course he graduated from, as Development Technologist, guiding students in their game projects. He enjoys every stage of game development, from game design, concept art to 2d painting and 3d modelling. In his spare time, he also creates flash games.
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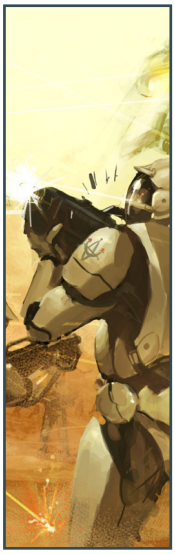
George Bletsis



is a freelance Concept Artist and Illustrator in the South of England. He's been working as a freelance artist for the past year, and previous projects include the feature film, Dangerous Parking, and the BBC documentary, Fight for Life. He has a love for the creative process and for the magical feeling of creating something out of nothing. He always tries to push himself, exploring new techniques and styles and incorporating them into his work. http://monstertree.blogspot.com
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WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO 3DCREATIVE OR 2DARTIST MAGAZINES?

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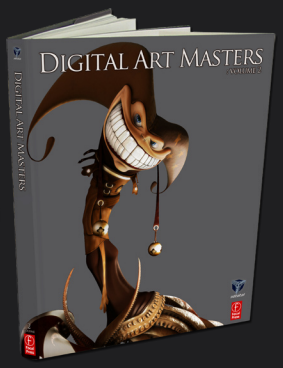


Ignacio Bazán Lazcano

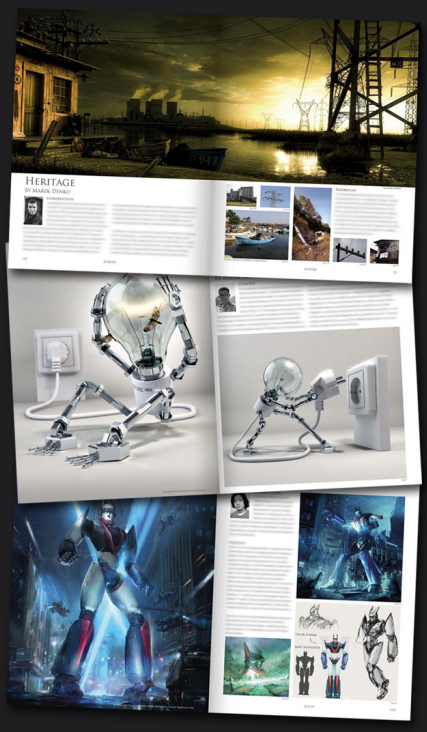


is a Concept Artist/Digital Illustrator in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He worked as a Game Artist and Illustrator for 4 years, and now works as a Concept Artist. He's worked for NGD Studios, Globalfun, Gameloft and now works with Timegate Studios and Sabarasa Entertainment. In the future he hopes to study in another country and work with the very best concept artists!
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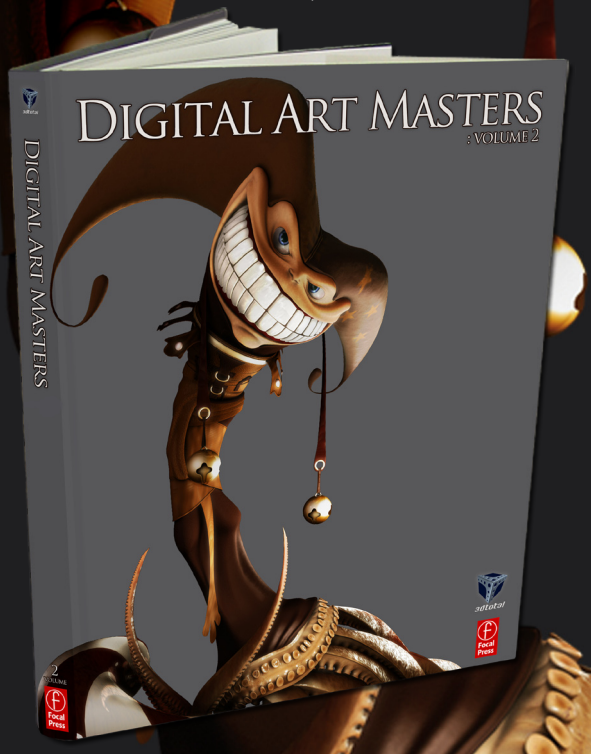
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ERIC WILKERSON

"I WOULD TELL ANYBODY CONSIDERING A CAREER AS A FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR TO FOLLOW THEIR HEART AND CREATE THE TYPE OF WORK THEY ENJOY CREATING..."



Eric Wilkerson is a painter and illustrator who has worked in areas as diverse as publishing, advertising and concept design for film. He has also been recognised in Spectrum, widely believed by many to be at the "vanguard" of Fantasy Art...

ERIC WILKERSON



You seem to be from a traditional art background judging by your profile, but when viewing your work online it is apparent that your digital skills look closely matched to the style of your painted work. What has been the greatest challenge in translating these skills onto a computer?

In 2003 I decided to do my commercial illustrations digitally, not for ease of workflow or speed but for the simple fact that I didn't have the physical space in my apartment to produce the oil paintings I wanted to do. I also began getting headaches from breathing in paint fumes for weeks at a time. The biggest challenge for me initially was learning the Photoshop interface and trying to find the right brushes to translate my traditional skills over. It took time to create a digital version of the controlled palette I use when painting in oils. When some traditional artists go digital they take full advantage of various filters and features of the program and end up with results that vaguely resemble their non-digital work. I always set out to create an end product that is virtually indistinguishable from non digital media.

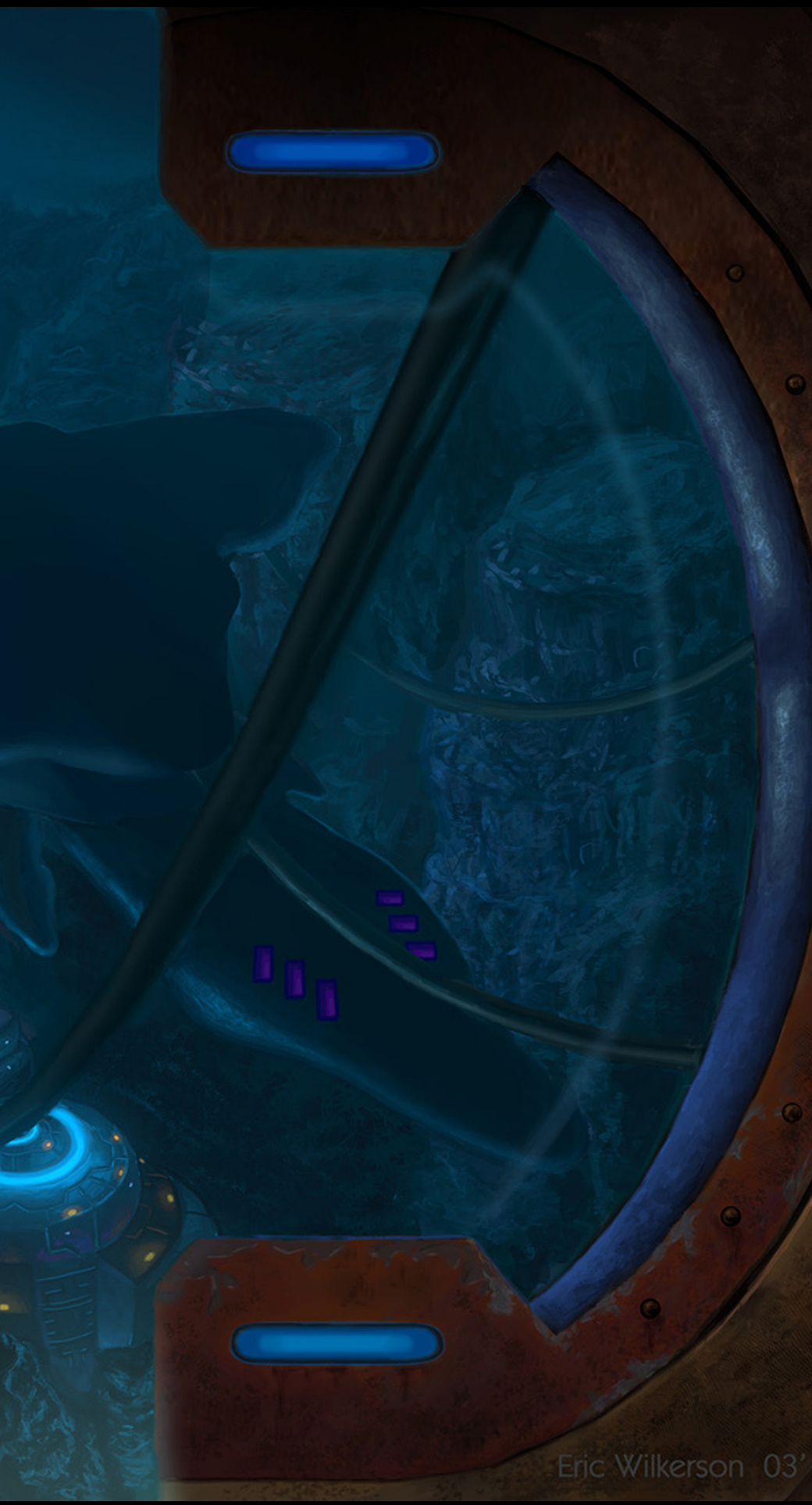


It is interesting that you mention the difficulty of creating a palette. Because monitors differ so much do you ever feel frustrated that you cannot see your digital work in its true sense, compared to an oil painting? Have you ever used Painter as a tool? If so, how does this compare to Photoshop?

An oil painting viewed in a poorly lit room will look different from a room with proper temperature controlled lighting, so too will digital work viewed on a monitor that isn't properly


WILKERSON 07





calibrated. I don't worry too much about what my work looks like on other people's monitors. I do sometimes wonder how a piece would have looked if I painted it in oils, but I accept the digital work for what it is and enjoy it as much as working traditionally. I have used Painter but found the program frustrating. Based on my experiences with both, I prefer Photoshop since it's a much more stable program. Both have their strong points. I've seen Photoshop work that I could swear was done in Painter and vice versa. Both are designed for artwork but creating a painting has a greater deal to do with the skills of the artist using the tools. The software or medium is secondary to the talent.

Is there still much demand for hand-painted material or can a freelance artist now work exclusively in a digital medium?

This depends on what type of freelance artist you are. I know muralists and portrait painters that scoff at the idea of digital painting. As for illustration, from my experience some clients do prefer a digital file over an actual piece of art that would then need to be scanned or photographed. As long as the deadline is met and the client is happy, I don't think it matters to them how the work is created. I think the real demand for traditional art comes from the after market for original illustration. There are artists out there that can sell their paintings for 5 times the amount of the original commission. This is a financial option not available to digital painters. Then again, there are plenty of traditional illustrators with rooms full of paintings nobody will ever want!

Science-fiction is undoubtedly a subject close to your heart, but is it possible to specialise in one or two genres and still find enough work, or is versatility a crucial part of your career?

There are a select few that can thrive on working within one or two genres of illustration. However, for most illustrators (including myself), there is a need to stay versatile and change our portfolios in order to find work in various markets. There are artists out there that bounce

from cover art, advertising, children's books, murals, portrait commissions, and a wide range of areas, to pay the bills.

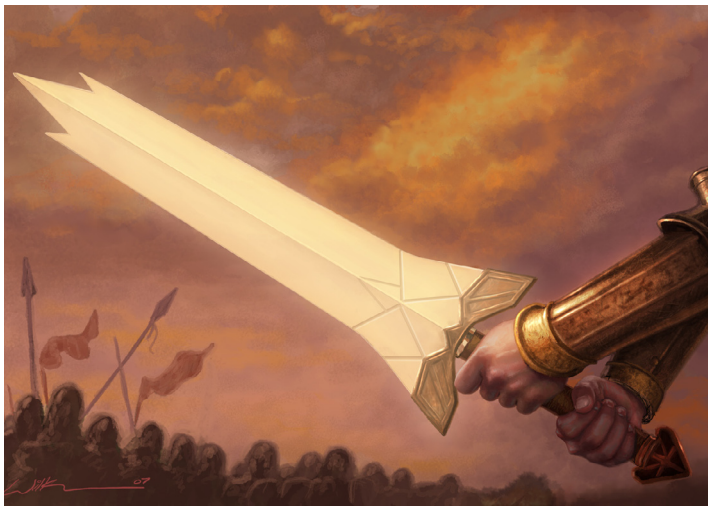
I am sure that many of our readers are considering breaking into the freelance market as illustrators. What advice could you offer them and what are the key difficulties attached to such a career path?

I would tell anybody considering a career as a freelance illustrator to follow their heart and create the type of work they enjoy creating. I believe your portfolio should be unique to your personality. There are very few instant break-out success stories in illustration, regardless of what genre you work in. It will take time to establish yourself in the field and, as you do, you'll hopefully obtain more work. The most difficult part is obtaining the commission in the first place! You have to be confident that your work is as strong as that of people that have been doing it for decades. Also, save your money! You never know when things may slow down and you'll be glad that you tucked away extra cash until work starts to become steady again. As a freelancer you'll have to find a balance between work and health. You will deal with deadlines and, consequently, you will deal with stress. Therefore you'll need to find ways to take care of yourself!



Has being published in books such as Spectrum been helpful in your quest for new commissions, or is appearing in such publications more of a luxury or privilege ultimately?

I consider it an honour and a privilege to be included among the best in the genre whenever I'm lucky enough to get in. I can't speak for everyone but I've received some attention and landed commissions based on art seen in my few appearances in Spectrum. Competition in this arena is fierce and only growing in quantity and international scope. So I am grateful to get in and don't feel like the world will end if I don't.



Your imagery is very detailed, with a close observation of anatomy and the effects of light. Do you use models and/or photos in order to achieve this level of accuracy with some of the anonymous characters?

I hire models and shoot photo references for all my figure work. When I work in oil paint I usually end up building small scale models of objects that I don't feel comfortable making up as I paint. Crude maquettes of aliens, robotic arms etc. are made out of materials like clay,



cardboard, sheet metal or anything I can find in the hardware store. I'll then light and photograph the maquette before painting. To make something look believable the lighting has to be acceptable. When I first started working digitally I would build small, simple block models in 3ds Max as a point of reference. The last time I did this was for the environment in my illustration "A State of Flux". It started off as a very basic model of a lab that was heavily painted over.

Do you find that 3d software such as 3ds Max is very helpful as a tool to understanding form and perspective, or do you feel as though there is no real substitute for real life?

I have a very limited knowledge of 3ds Max. Often I don't have time to build environments etc. out of real world materials. 3D software helps me to explore new camera angles and compositions I wouldn't have considered. However, in my opinion, when it comes to understanding form and how light affects an object there is no substitute for real life. To sculpt and hold an actual physical model in your hands is so much easier for me than pushing and pulling vertices.

The style of your work and colour palettes seems to hark back to an earlier era in illustration. Is this a deliberate intention?

Absolutely! I spend a good deal of time looking back at golden age illustrators and works from artists such as Il'ya Repin and Jean-Léon Gérôme before beginning a new painting. I find their palettes, compositions, storytelling and overall handling of paint inspirational. So much can be learned from studying the artistic principles of the old Brandywine school of illustration.




WILKERSON 07

If there is one period or aspect from sci-fi history that you could devote a long period of time illustrating, what would it be and why?

Hmmm… I'd consider painting scenes from Frank Herbert's Dune, Star Wars or Lord of the Rings, but that's been done to death and by illustrators that have genuine love for the source material. I could see myself painting my own original works or spending a great deal of time illustrating scenes from some of my favourite classic anime. I fell in love with the big robot genre of anime when I was a kid. I'd love to spend time creating illustrations based on Voltron, Super Dimensional Fortress Macross, Giant Robo, Evangelion or just about anything produced by Gainax.

You have worked in a number of different areas of industry but which do you feel have been the most rewarding on a personal level?

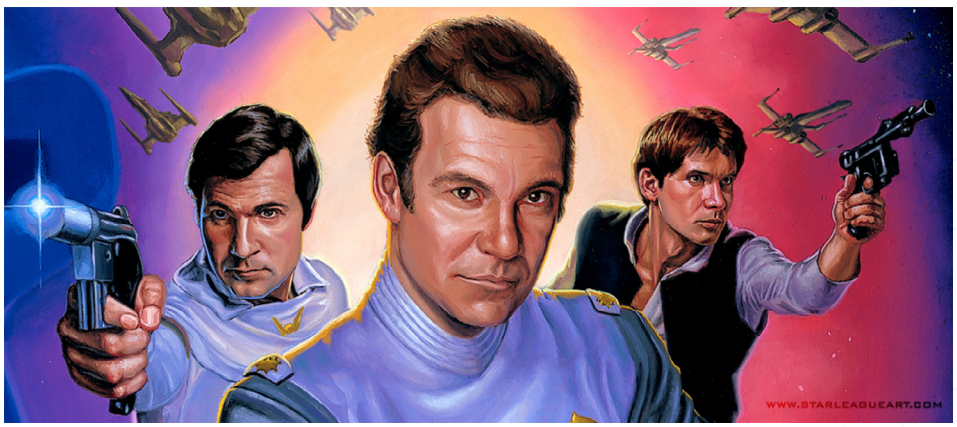
I've been away from doing much sci-fi/fantasy illustration for a few years, while working for advertising clients, but this genre has always brought me the most artistic satisfaction. I get giddy while painting this stuff! Every stage of a painting is exciting to me, from the rough sketch on through the final brushstrokes. I've met good friends, made invaluable connections and studied with amazing mentors while trying to establish myself in this genre of illustration.

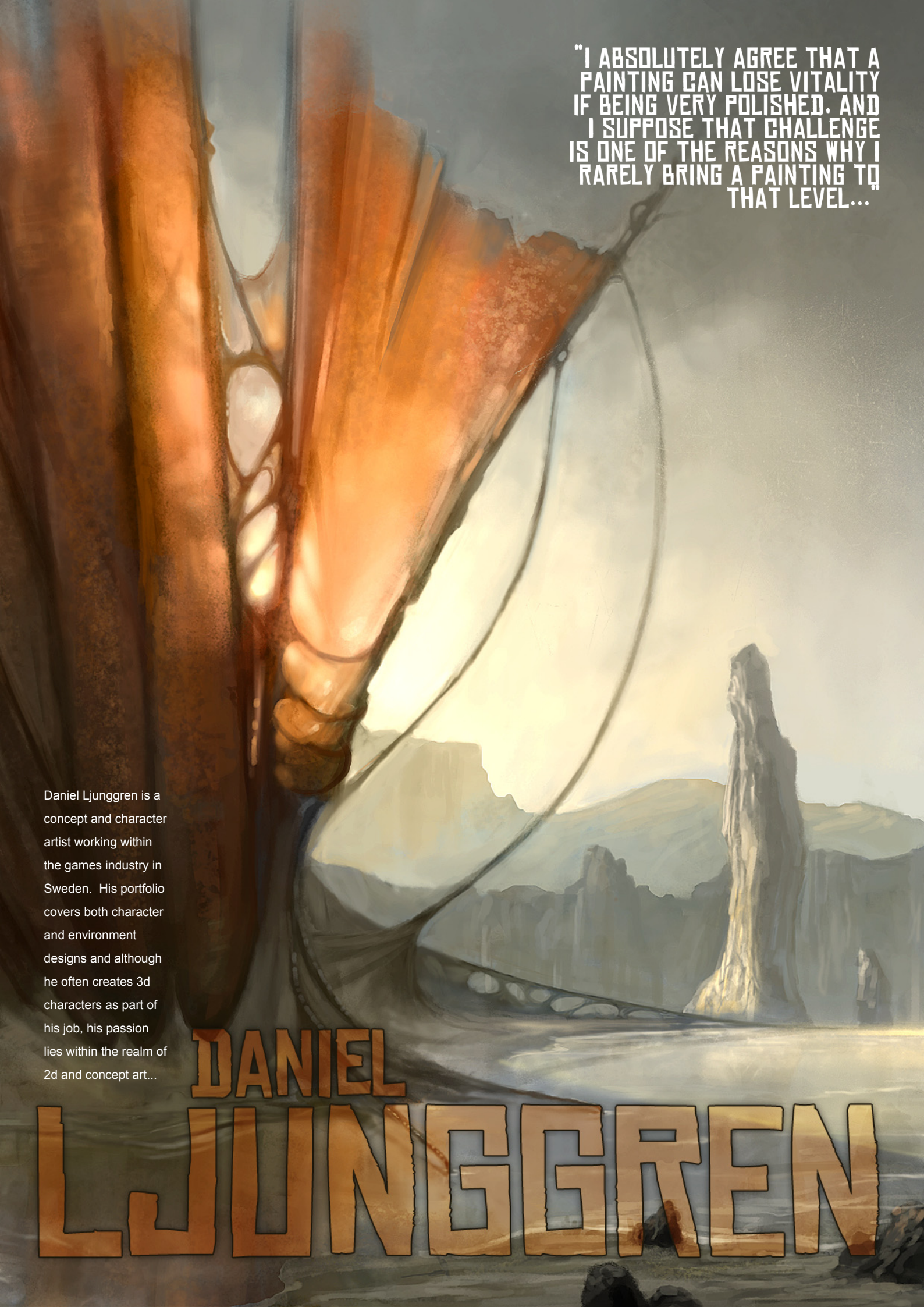


ERIC WILKERSON

For more work by this artist please visit:
www.starleagueart.com
Or contact them at:
eric683@msn.com

Interviewed by: Richard Tilbury




"I ABSOLUTELY AGREE THAT A PAINTING CAN LOSE VITALITY IF BEING VERY POLISHED. AND I SUPPOSE THAT CHALLENGE IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I RARELY BRING A PAINTING TO THAT LEVEL..."
Daniel Ljunggren is a concept and character artist working within the games industry in Sweden. His portfolio covers both character and environment designs and although he often creates 3d characters as part of his job, his passion lies within the realm of 2d and concept art...
DANIEL
LJUNGGREN

DANIEL LJUNGGREN





First of all Daniel, could you tell us a little about your background and how you came to work in the games industry?

After the gymnasium (university-preparatory school), I had some time off before I started studying at university. During this time I had a few temp jobs, which I think helped me realise the importance of having a job you enjoy. This was also the time I discovered The Dig, an adventure game from LucasArts (which I still believe to be one of the best games in the genre!). Being tremendously inspired by the pre-rendered cinematics (together with the atmosphere, music and story), I knew that I wanted to do just that, so I started to learn 3d the best I could using mailing groups and contacts over IRC (I don't think there was much forum activity back then!). This kept me busy for a couple of years, and over time I managed to put together a portfolio on my website. This gave way to a few freelance opportunities with companies abroad, and a short term – later full-time – position at a games company here in Sweden.

It is interesting that games are so often now associated with story lines, as you have mentioned. Character development and plot also feature heavily nowadays, which, during the early days, almost seemed irrelevant. What kind of bearing do you think these attributes add to the artists job nowadays, if any?

I think it was the technical limitations that kept developers from being able to create games with such attributes back then, but I still remember being moved by some of them. Today there is definitely more capacity for doing this, though.

With ambitious storytelling and character development the artist would need to focus more on believability than "shallower" games where it might be less important. For instance, a wide range of emotions in a character would help support an engaging story, and for an artist that would mean more focus on the model being able to move and deform in a believable manner. Cut scenes are used a lot for pushing a story forwards, and that means more "acting" of virtual characters than before.

Your website comprises of purely 2d work, even though you are also a 3d artist. Do you have any plans to create an album for your 3d work?

I used to have a portfolio of 3d work during the years when it was the only thing I did, but nowadays I prefer painting in my free time. I do admit that 3d graphics is a lot more interesting now that ZBrush and Mudbox have surfaced





– being able to feel more creative than ever with modelling – but painting is still my biggest passion.

What type of 3d work do you do and where do you feel your main skills lie?

I've covered a few different areas of 3d from my years in the games industry, but if I do 3d nowadays it's usually character work, which is also what I find most fun and rewarding. I think modelling is the part of the process that I enjoy most, with the sculpting applications now available, as mentioned earlier, and also the part which comes easiest to me.

Do you work on characters as well as concepting at your current company, and how do you feel the games industry in Sweden compares with the rest of Europe?

Yes, there has been a little bit of both, though mostly concept art, for which I'm happy and grateful. Further into the project, when the


DARYL





concept phase is over, I will most likely continue doing 3d characters. As far as I know the games industry in Sweden doesn't differ much from other countries, but I'm really impressed by the games developed here over the last few years. I'm happy to see that the Swedish studios are doing well and that they have exciting and promising titles under development.

Much of your work displays an economical use of brushwork that seems to give the images a vitality that often disappears with more polished pieces. Are your pictures re-worked heavily with much over-painting, or are they completed quite swiftly to create this quality?

I absolutely agree that a painting can lose vitality if being very polished, and I suppose that challenge is one of the reasons why I rarely bring a painting to that level. Other reasons are that I don't have much patience, and that I prefer a painterly, more impulsive look. When I see paintings with confident brushstrokes, traces from the artist and his/her brush, I feel that I can appreciate the work a lot more. As for the brushwork in my own paintings, I don't re-work to get that effect, but if I have a drawing or value sketch underneath so that I know what I'm painting (instead of searching for a motive meanwhile), it makes it easier to focus more on the brushwork than the "drawing" since it's already there.

You mention "searching for a motive". Are you implying that sometimes you begin a painting with very little or no idea of what will emerge and, if so, is this a useful device in keeping a sense of vitality?

When I'm painting at home and for my own sake then that is definitely so.





I might have a hunch of the mood or “feeling”, but not an actual idea of what I will be painting. This makes it a little more fun and less within boundaries, and I suppose painting what I want adds some vitality to it in comparison to something I find less interesting. It’s also an exciting process: painting brushstrokes much on random, then all of a sudden you’re starting to see something you can relate to – something that was very abstract just a second earlier.

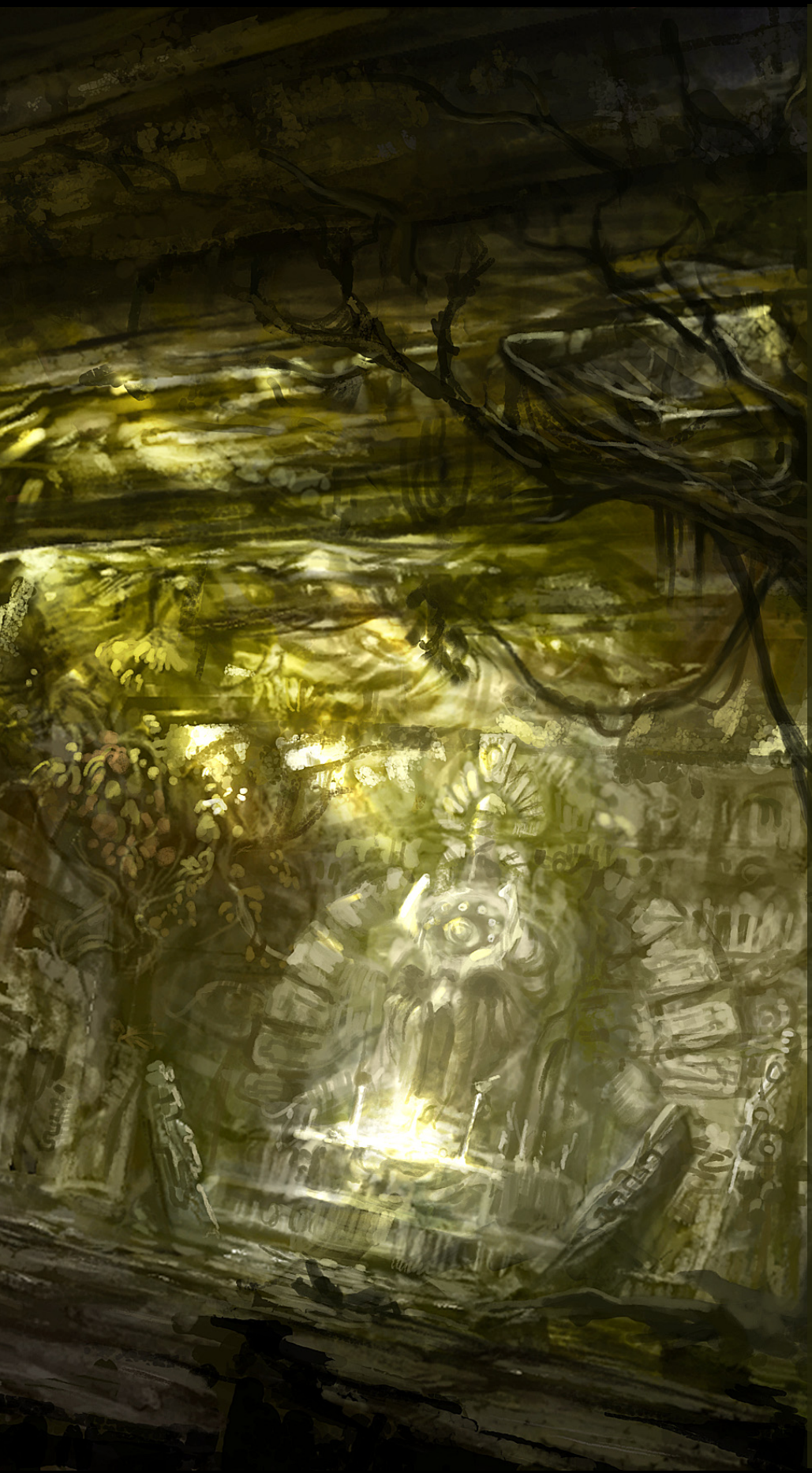
I notice that a number of your pictures have a deliberately limited, almost monochromatic, palette with a small passage of colour used to highlight a focal point. Tell us a little about your reasoning behind this technique?

I think that it’s just a simple way of making sure what the viewer sees first, since contrast both in colour and value is attracting the eye. It can be seen a lot in Rembrandt’s beautiful paintings, for example.

Which painters or artists have had the most affect upon your development?

I remember H.R Giger, as well as Brom, being big sources of inspiration in contemporary art when I first started (back then all I wanted to paint was dark and moody stuff!). Rembrandt


DARYL



and Anders Zorn were also artists whose paintings I studied. Aside from trying to figure out things while looking at other artists' work, I think it was the people on the Sijun forum that were a big help and motivation for me to keep trying (and still is!).

How important do you feel these forums are to people starting out, and indeed artists in general?

I think that depends on what your basic conditions are. I believe that if you have the opportunity to learn within a creative environment, in company of experienced as well as aspiring artists, that would definitely be the best and fastest way to learn things. If not then forums are the second best way, where you can get some directions to learning material as well as getting help and tips from other artists. As for artists in general, I think forums are a great way to get inspired and motivated, and it's a huge source for learning.

Which among your pieces rank as your favourites and why?

"Favourite" is too strong a word for me to use with my own paintings; it's something I feel I only apply to other artists work! If I'm satisfied with an image it's usually when it's fairly new, but I suppose that has to do with my having grown tired with older ones, or that I (hopefully) have learned things from earlier paintings.

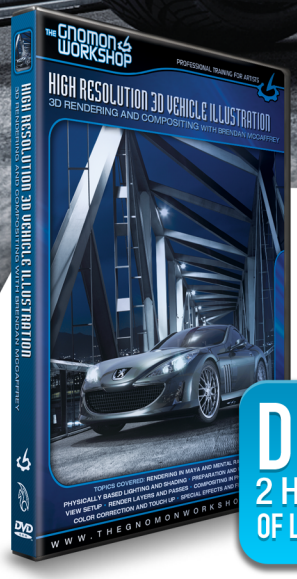
DANIEL LJUNGGREN

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Tim Warnock

We last interviewed Tim over two years ago in our very first issue. His images were damn good then, but would you believe he's only gone and levelled up and the work we have this time is simply stunning! It's a result of pure talent and a great passion for his art, but as you will read he has a dedication to keeping up with the technical side of things, too..

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Tim Warnock



Intelligent Creatures (c) New Line Cinema

Hiya Tim, you're the first artist to ever get a second interview in 2DArtist mag! And it's very deservedly so, too! What have the last two years brought you, in terms of your career?

What an honour! Thanks for thinking of me again. If I remember correctly I was just beginning working at Intelligent Creatures at the time of the last interview. In my time there I worked on Babel, The Number 23, Silent Hill, Stranger Than Fiction, The Hunting Party, and a few other odds and ends here and there. At the beginning of November 2007 I took a contract with Animal Logic that runs until November of this year. I'm working on Baz Luhrmann's 'Australia'. It's been a really good experience so far and skipping out on winter in Canada is a big bonus. Unfortunately, I can't really talk about the production until it's finished.


Intelligent Creatures (c) New Line Cinema


Intelligent Creatures (c) New Line Cinema

I bumped into you and Dan Wheaton at the ADAPT conference in Montreal. Did you find the lectures there beneficial, and would you recommend it to others?

ADAPT was great! Probably the best conference I've attended! I think the size of it was really conducive to meeting people and getting a chance to talk with some of the presenters. I even got my copy of Blade Runner signed by Syd Mead! The biggest highlight for me was the presentation by Ian McCaig. The man is just so inspiring! It was also just a great time to connect with old friends and meet new ones. I have a particular pride for anything that comes out of Montreal since that is where my

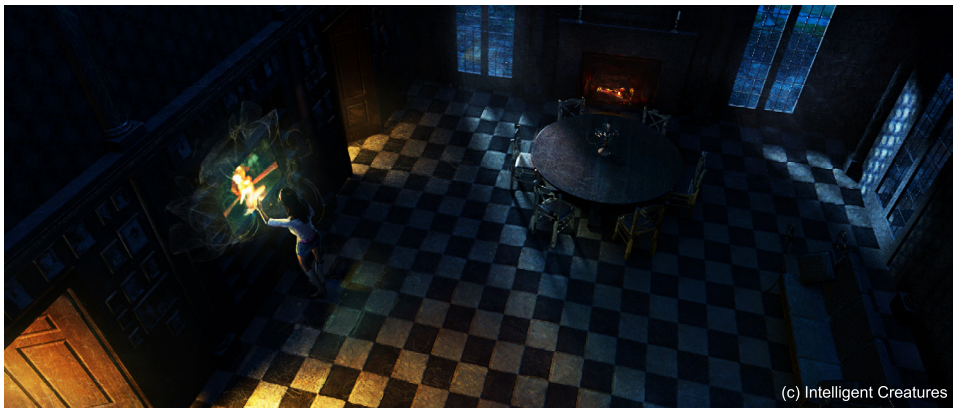

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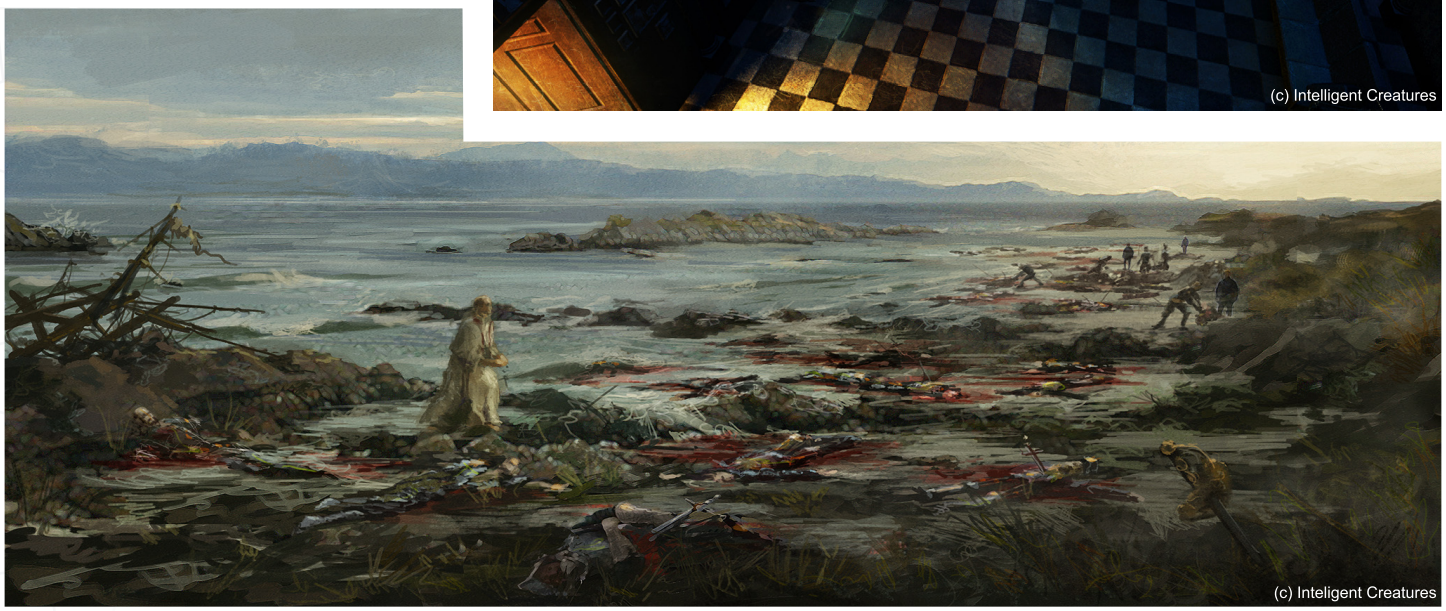
family is from. It's a great city with so many talented artists. I would definitely recommend that people check out ADAPT. It's a great conference and fantastic value for the money!

Now then Tim, you once e-mailed me and said you were thinking of coming to our side of the Atlantic and starting work right here on our little green island. So what went wrong?!

Ha ha, nothing went wrong! That's just the way it goes. Nothing is definite until a contract has been signed. I find I spend a fare amount of time chatting with companies about potential opportunities. I just like to do my homework and find out what a city is like before wading in too deep. Sometimes you don't see the fruit of


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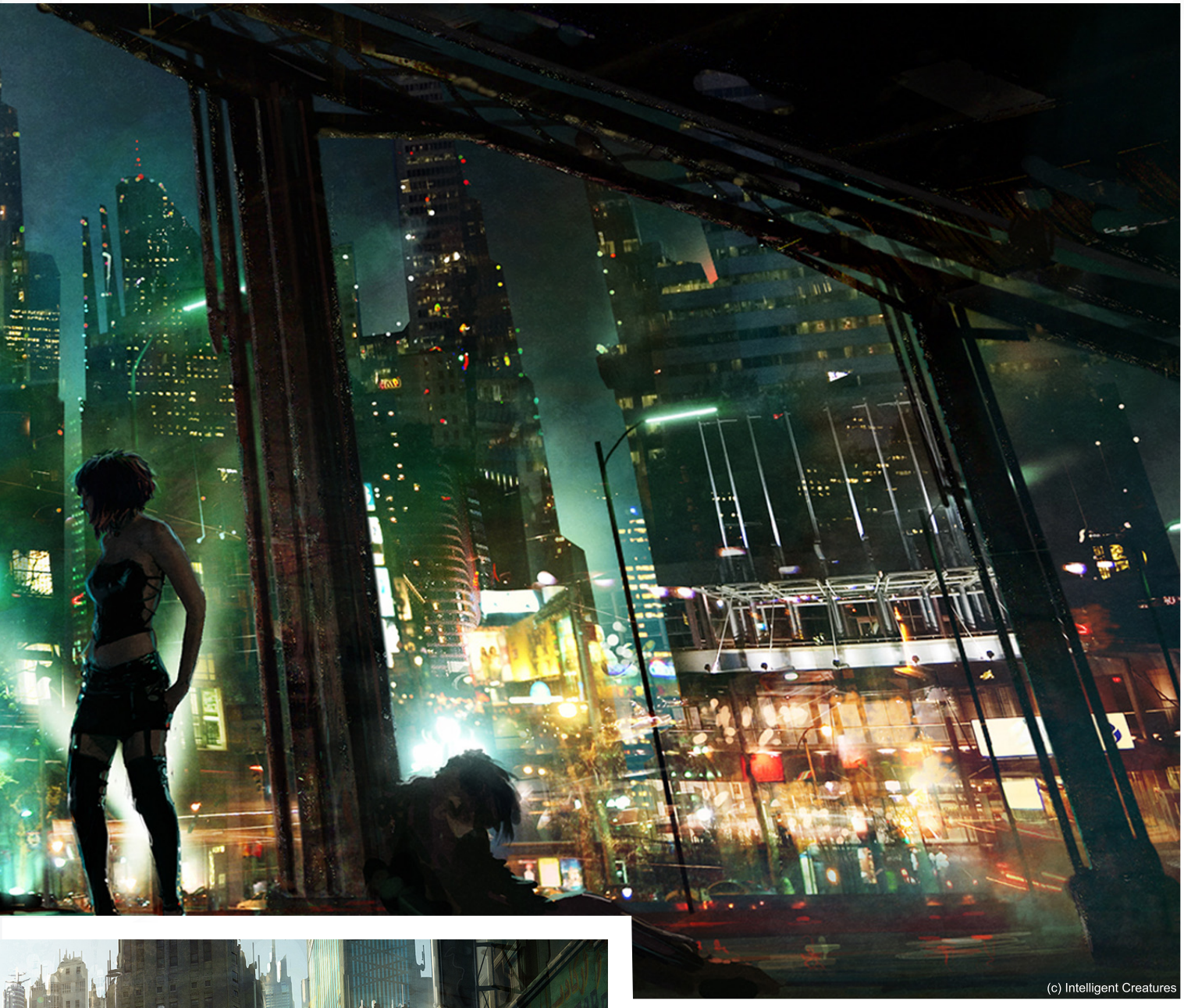


those conversations for a little while. It's just the nature of the business. I don't mind. I've met some really interesting people along the way. London has so many great facilities and they all seem to work on really exciting projects. It still would be fun to get over there at some point and I'm sure it will happen eventually. Do you have a spare room...?



Yeah, we've got a spare room but unfortunately it comes with a gimp suit and the occupant doesn't get let out much... do you think this would cause a problem?

That's such a coincidence because I was just dusting off my old gimp suit the other day and saying to my wife what a shame it is that we never use it any more! They're quite expensive and good ones are hard to find! (Mum, if you are reading this, don't Google "gimp suit", and I'm just joking!)



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When I spoke to you last you were pretty accomplished in your works and techniques. Have you noticeably improved over the last two years? Learned anything new? Found any new favourite ways of working or new software?

Over the past two years I've really invested a lot in picking up more technical skills, mainly in 3d applications. I'm always trying to expand my tool set to increase my versatility. I had been using XSi mainly, but in the past two years have used more of Maya and recently 3D Studio. Last week I bought ZBrush and am anxious to get into that! It feels really nice; I can't get over how responsive and fast it is! But this is a 2d magazine! Of course, 2d work makes up the larger portion of what I do. CS3 brought some nice new features. I think we were all disappointed that it wasn't a 64 bit app. CS4, maybe? Please!! I like the change to the Brightness and Contrast filter and also the Curves filter is a little more robust. The





Bioshock TV Spot Client: Eyeball NYC (c) 2K Games



new cloning modes are really useful, too. Some of the new features, with importing 3d and footage, look promising. It will be interesting to see how they evolve. The changes to the interface took me a little while to get used to but overall I think they are improvements, especially when you are working on a laptop and want to get maximum work space. Other than that, every painting brings new challenges and growth as an artist. I just start every job and say, “Don’t screw this up, Tim!” If it’s a good day, I listen to myself.



Well, judging by your latest images it looks like you are obeying the voice in your head quite well! It’s interesting you mention ZBrush actually as this is considered by some a good bridge between 2d and 3d. I know it is a bit technical, but do you think it’s a good one for your average Photoshop painter to have a play with? Mainly for people who enjoy painting characters, would you say?

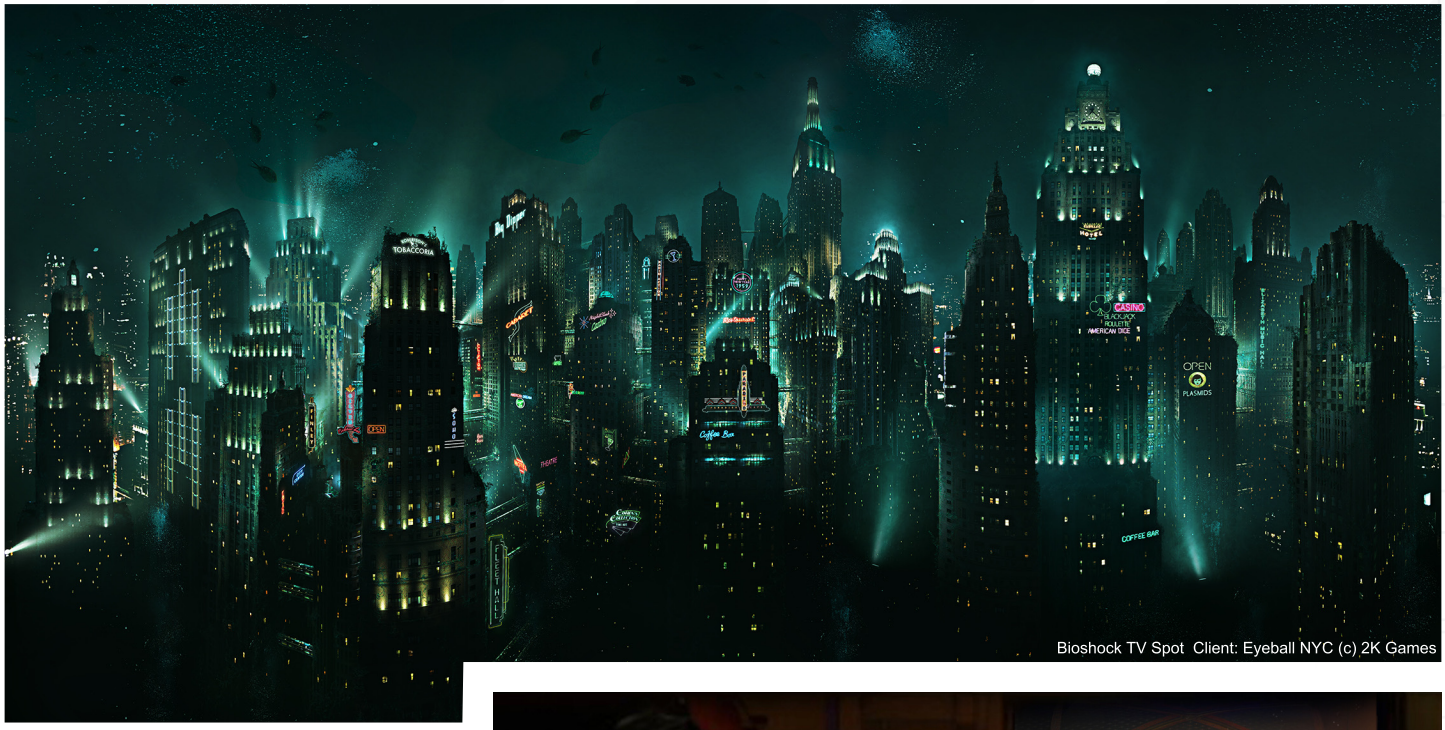


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I think one of the most rewarding things about ZBrush is that you can begin doing some fun stuff with very little instruction. It has its quirks for sure, don't get me wrong. It will require some tutorials to master it, but right out of the box you can start doing simple stuff that is pretty exciting the first time you try it. I don't ever remember having that kind of reaction when opening Maya for the first time. I think it was more like "Okay, so I've got a cube... Now what?!"

I will say that, if you are looking to learn 3d, then I'm not sure that ZBrush is a good place to start. To learn the fundamentals of modelling, texturing and lighting, I think most would agree that you're better off with a standard 3d package. Still, I would encourage anyone to try it, even if you're not a painter. It's just so fun!



Bioshock TV Spot Client: Eyeball NYC (c) 2K Games

I usually round interviews off with, “What’s your dream commission?” Or, “What advice do you have for the readers?” But I think I’ve overdone those ones now! So, for you, here’s a special one! Throughout your career, please tell us at what moment were you most ‘pissed off’, and why?

Ha ha, oh dear... You can ask Dan for an off-the-record-report on my most ‘pissed off’ moments! We have worked at three different companies together so he would know better than anyone. I also had a PC that I wanted to drop off a bridge more than a few times. I’m sure that’s not uncommon. It was a rage-laden letter to Corel about Painter 8 that landed me beta testing Painter 9 and contributing to the Painter community for a little while! That’s actually a pretty funny story! In Version 8 of Painter, if you saved in the native file format


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Before - Intelligent Creatures (c) The Weinstein Co.


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your image would become corrupted! I wrote this e-mail to them and was ripping mad. I lost hours of work! Then, shortly after, I was in Austin TX at the Massive Black conference and Dan was chatting with Rick Champagne about Painter 9. Dan turns to me and says, “You should tell him about your problem!” Rick’s eyes lit up and he said, “You’re the guy!” It was quite funny and I really enjoyed what came of that. Most people that know me will tell you that I’m a pretty easy-going guy, and that if I’m pissed off it’s usually for a pretty good reason!

You’re not alone when you say losing work is one of the most infuriating things that can happen to artist; it’s kind of a rush of anger and dismay all at the same time. Well done for being able to channel it into an e-mail and give them some feedback, that’s a much better result than a projectile mouse smashing against a brick wall!

Yeah, my walls are plaster and I’ve never been very good with home renovations. I have grown quite accustomed to saving multiple iterations and doing it often. In the past year I’ve become a bit obsessive with protecting my data with everything in triplicate. I have a RAID that is the main storage for all my work and then I have a 500GB drive I carry with me so if anything should happen to my RAID I have it at work as well. Storage is so cheap these days. It’s just good practice to take steps to protect your work. I worked with a guy who lost all of the existing pictures of one of his children because of a drive failure and there was no backup. That’s a bad day!

Thanks again Tim for your time, I hope to bump into you again in the near future!

Thank you, Tom. My pleasure!

TIM WARNOCK

For more work by this artist please visit:
http://www.thenextside.com/
Or contact them at:
tim@thenextside.com

Interviewed by: Tom Greenway



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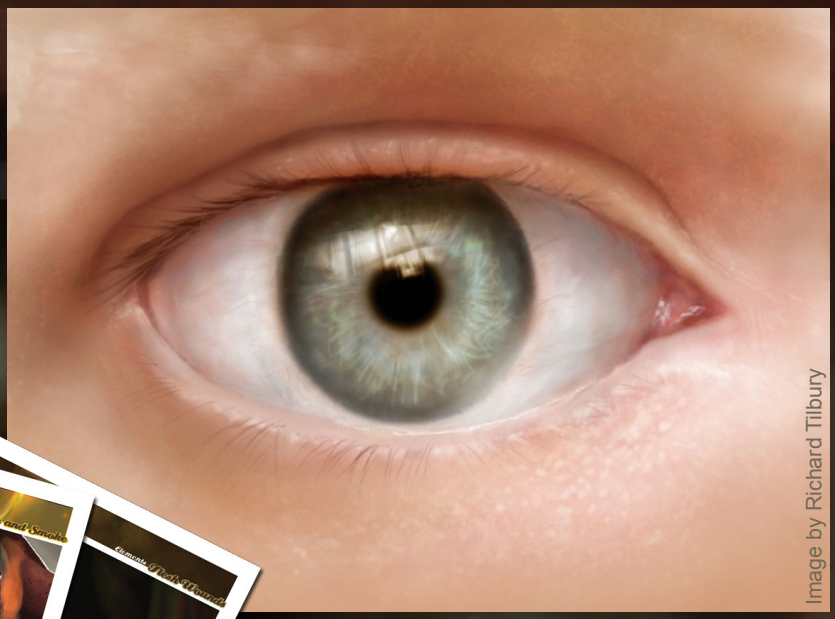


Image by Richard Tilbury





Image by Chris Thung

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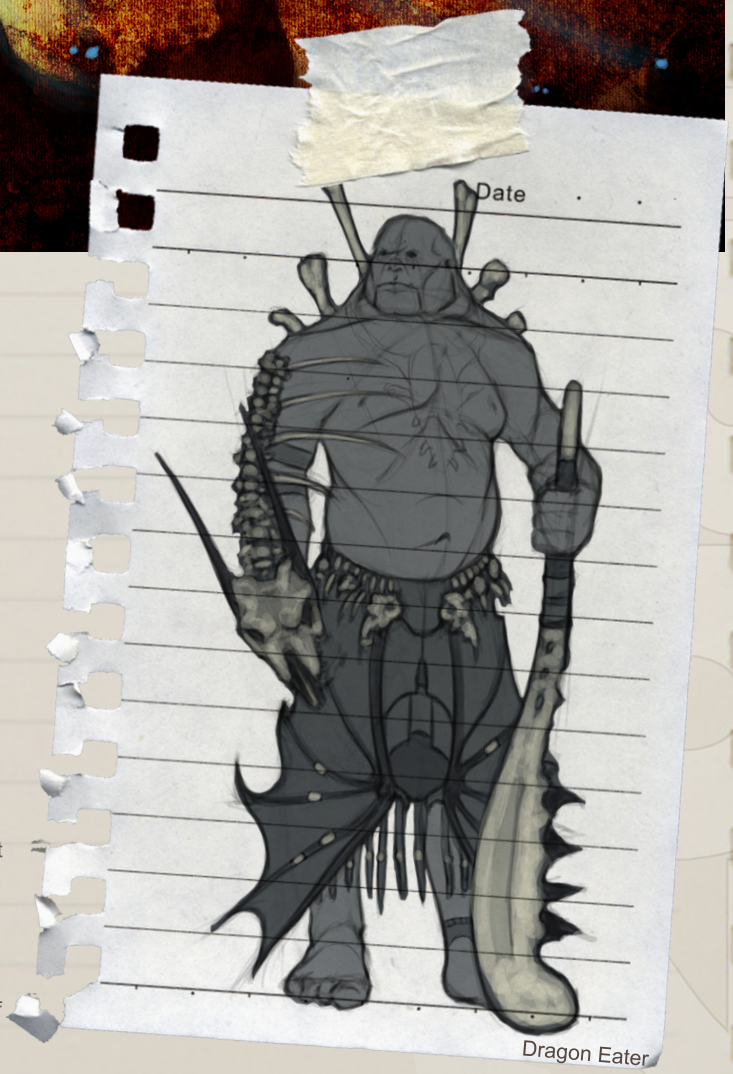


the Sketchbook of James Wolf Strehle

In this article James Wolf Strehle tells us how he likes to work in his sketchbooks, and about some of the thought process behind the artwork he has created...

Dark Pregnancy





The “sketchbook” is my creative diary that holds every little thought and idea that I have in this eccentric brain of mine, most of which are completely unreadable to anyone but myself. It’s also filled with pictures, quotes, and anything else that will inspire future projects. A lot of the time the sketch will be nothing but a few scribbles with some dialogue of what music I was listening to, movie I was watching, or any other form of inspiration that the idea sprung from. Again, very confusing for an outside viewer but invaluable to me!

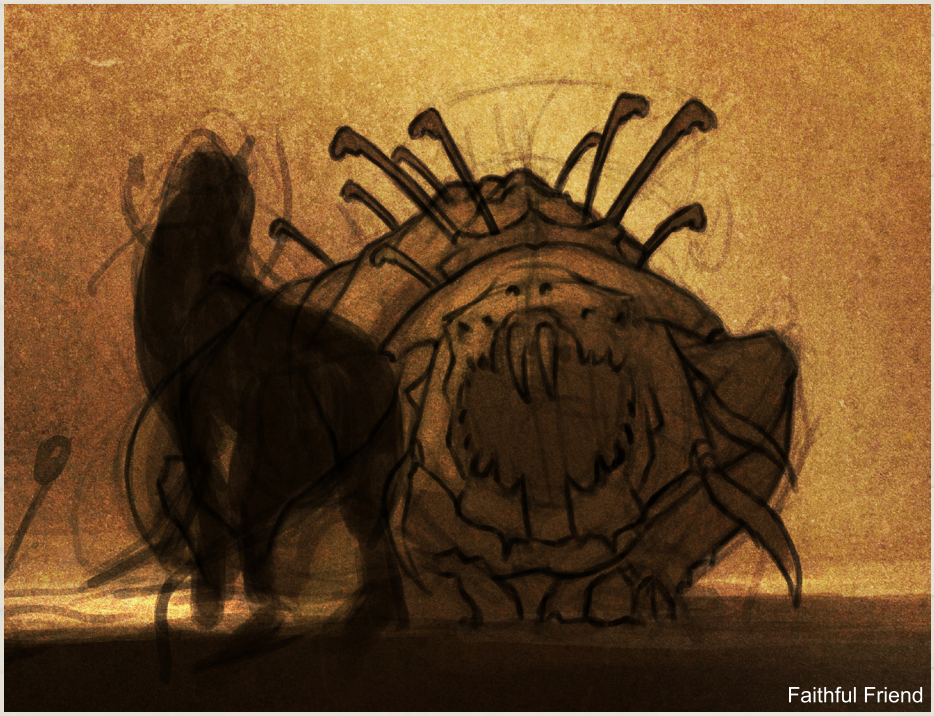
On the other hand, I have sketches that are almost full paintings (**Dark Pregnancy**). The reasoning for this is that I go through so many ideas and sketches a week that, if I don’t add in some mood and colour, I’ll never remember the original direction of the piece. Digital sketch work makes this process very quick and easy so I can move on to new ideas. After looking through my sketches I’ve noticed that I really don’t have a set style. That’s because it really depends on how the idea forms in my head. There are times where I’ll know all the intricacies of a character’s outfit (**Amazonian**) (**Dragon Eater**), and other times I’ll be going solely on an idea based off of cast shadows, in which case the sketch takes the form of a grey scaled painting with almost no line work.

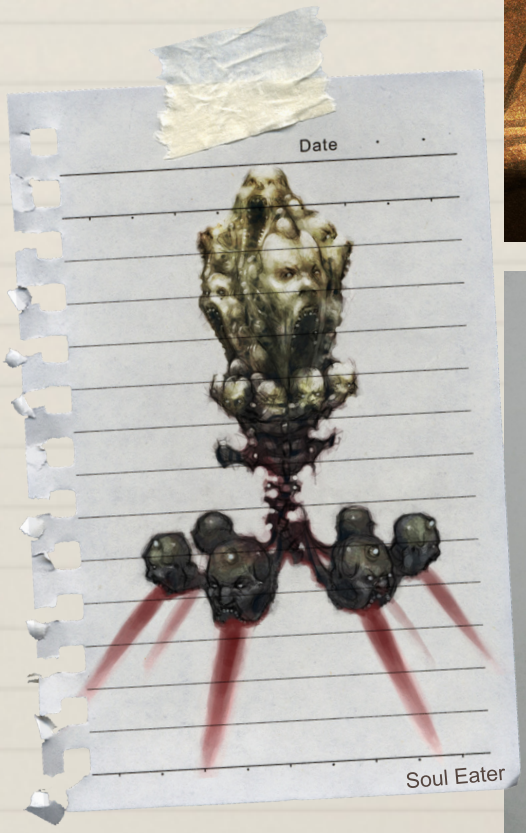


Sometimes an idea is more about the colour than the details of the sketch. With the **Medusa** piece, for example, I didn't have a clear vision of the details in the character but I knew exactly what colours I wanted for the piece, and actually that was more critical than the detail. I'll be posting the finished piece on-line very soon if anyone is interested!

Medusa

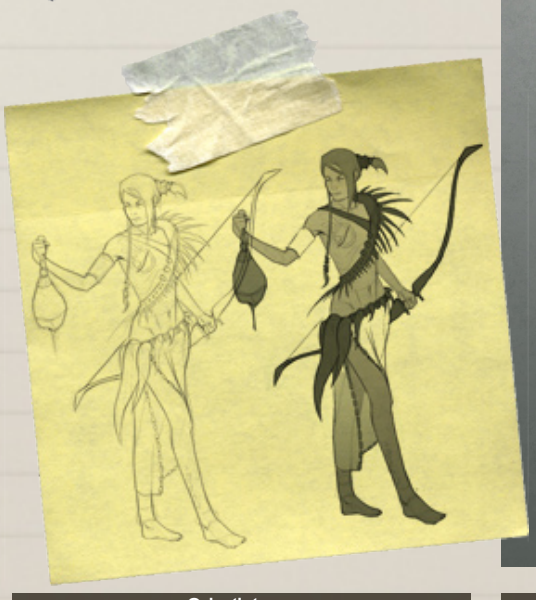
There are some cases where the object isn't all that important, in the sketch stage at least. For example, in **Faithful Friend** there is a big black blob in the foreground – that is a horse, but it wasn't really important for me to refine the sketch of the horse because I know what it is and I'll deal with the accuracy later on in the painting. What is important is that I maintain the presence of the horse. I'd rather have a sloppy sketch that clearly portrays my idea than a tight sketch that has lost the presence in the process of making things look accurate.


Faithful Friend



Soul Eater


Amazonian

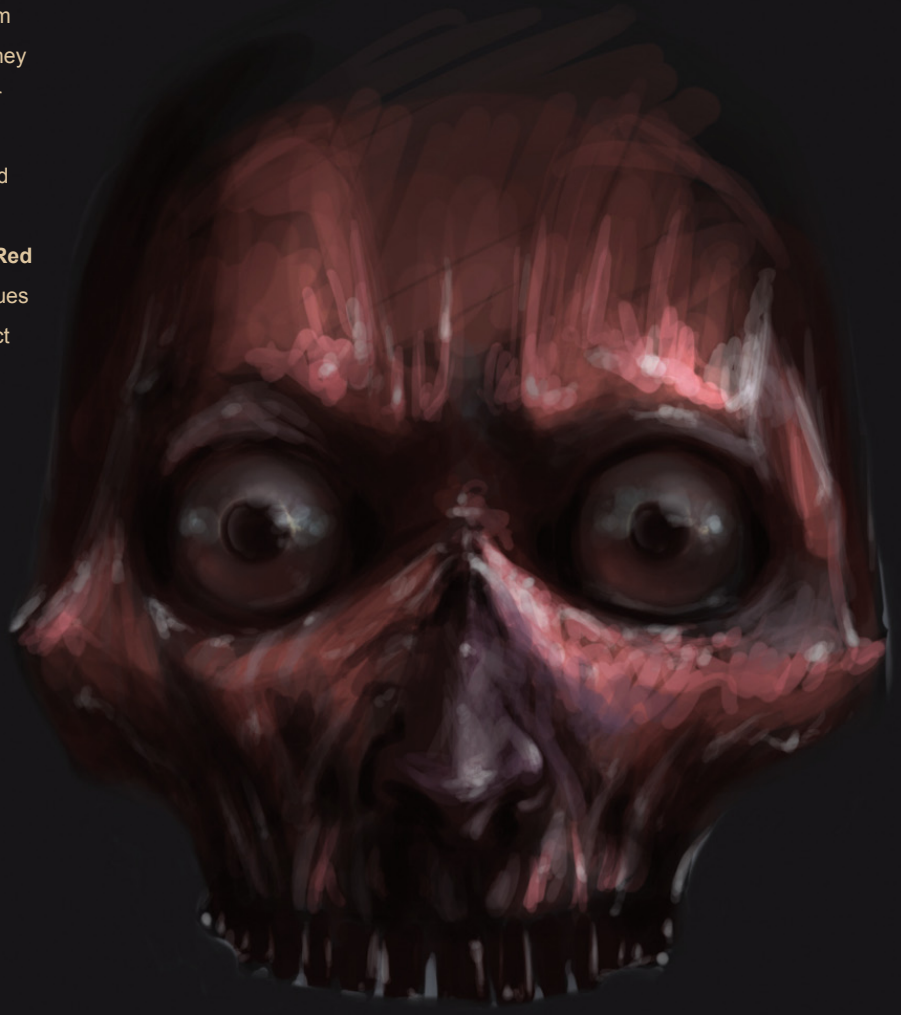




Of course, that's not to say one has to choose one or the other, and in fact my larger paintings are all refined before heading off to the painting stage, but for the vast majority of my sketches I choose to keep them quick and loose – time is money!

Most of all, my sketchbook is about having fun. It's filled with miscellaneous things that will never be fully realised or see the light of day, but they are things that I really enjoy doing.

I love creating creepy heads, for example (**Scary Heads**), and I have a bunch of them floating all throughout my sketchbooks. They are pretty much practice work and tests for the future. With the head on the left I was dealing with the issue of eye reflectivity and on the right I was playing with expressions and wrinkles. With the red-headed cutie (**Red Head**) I was obviously dealing with the issues of "WHAT THE HELL!?", which is a subject matter I am still learning the intricacies of.



Red Head



Scary Heads

Another thing you'll find scattered around my sketch files are vast amounts of creatures (**Few Creatures**); these were actually for a CA challenge but I have a tonne of creature and mythological beasts lurking all over my sketchbook. This tends to be my favourite subject when I'm bored.

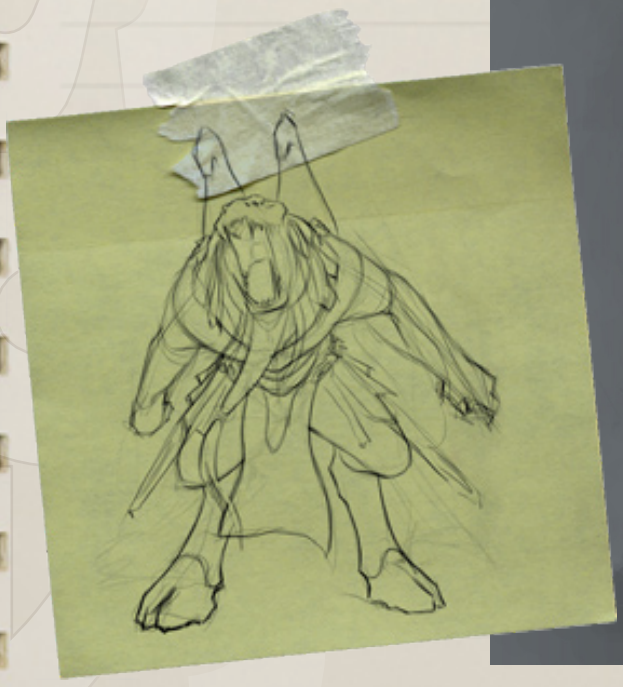


Few Creatures











Voo Lizard



Bridge Dragon

Lastly, I have sketches of ideas that, for one reason or another, have been deemed failures. I find these to be of great value because, like they say, you learn from your mistakes. **Bridge Dragon** (clever name, huh?) was one of those pieces; the ideas were strong but compositionally the piece was very poor. However, since I maintained the mood of the piece I'll most likely go back with a new perspective at some point.

Thanks so much for taking a look at my sketchbook and I hope it has been of some value to you. I know a few of these have already been posted on-line, but I can't give away all my ideas!!



JAMES WOLF STREHLE

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Dean Oyebo





DID SOMEBODY JUST SAY OW?

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HALF-OCTOPUS THIEF

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LORD SOMETHING

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TREE OF TIME

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QUEEN

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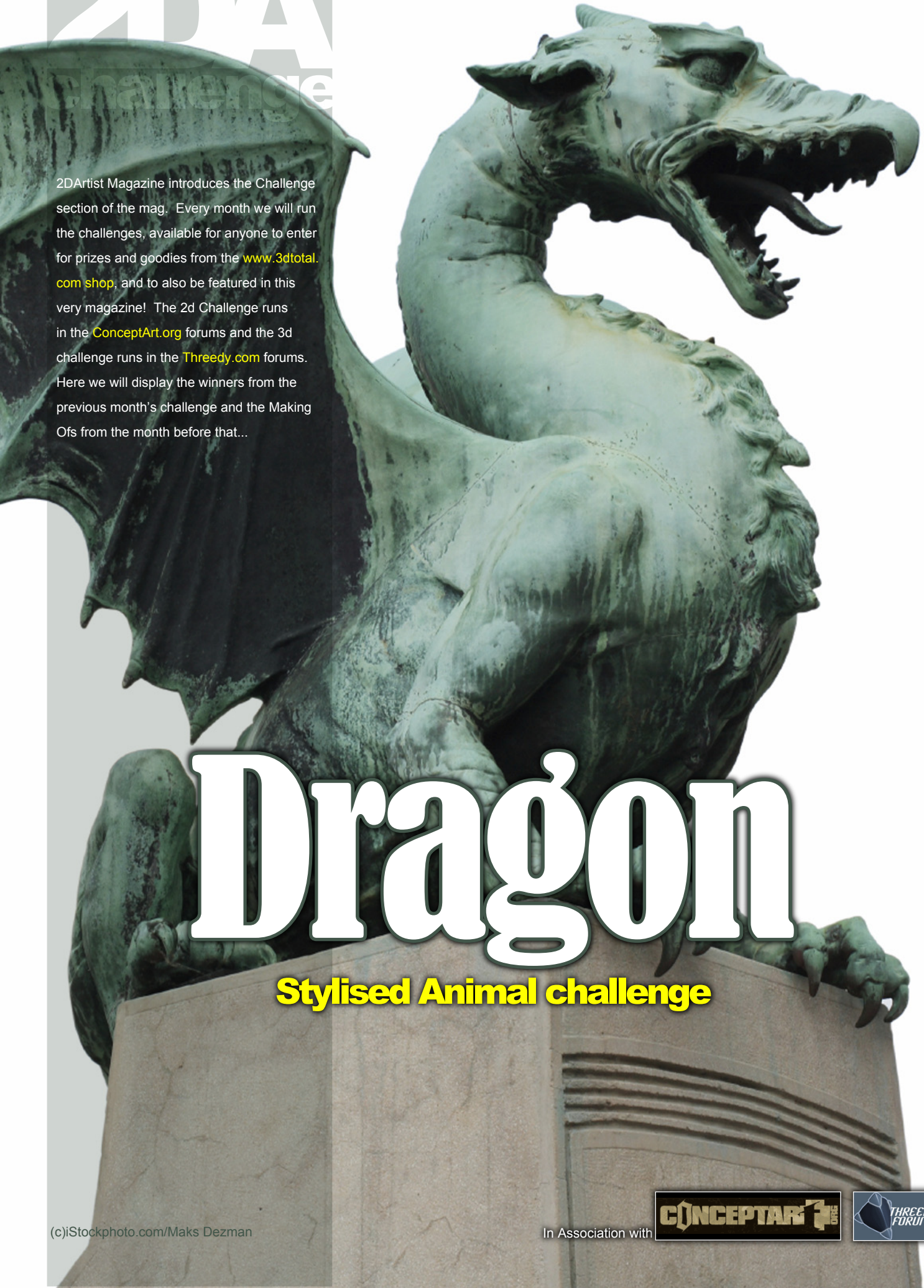
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the 2DA Challenge

2DArtist Magazine introduces the Challenge section of the mag. Every month we will run the challenges, available for anyone to enter for prizes and goodies from the www.3dtotal.com shop, and to also be featured in this very magazine! The 2d Challenge runs in the ConceptArt.org forums and the 3d challenge runs in the Threedy.com forums. Here we will display the winners from the previous month's challenge and the Making Ofs from the month before that...



Dragon

Stylised Animal challenge

(c)iStockphoto.com/Maks Dezman

In Association with CONCEPTART.ORG THREEDY FORUMS

Stylised Animal Challenge

Dragon

THE CHALLENGE

Welcome to the Stylised Animal Monthly Challenge. Each month we will select an animal and post some images in the forum thread as reference. All you have to do is create a 2d image of this creature in a stylised/ abstract/cartoon style, whilst keeping your creature instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist magazine on how to create stylised animals, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries. We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images and Making Ofs that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure. If it continues in success, we will try to boost the prizes as much as possible! This month's animal was the **Dragon!** Here you can see the top nine entries, as voted for by the public...



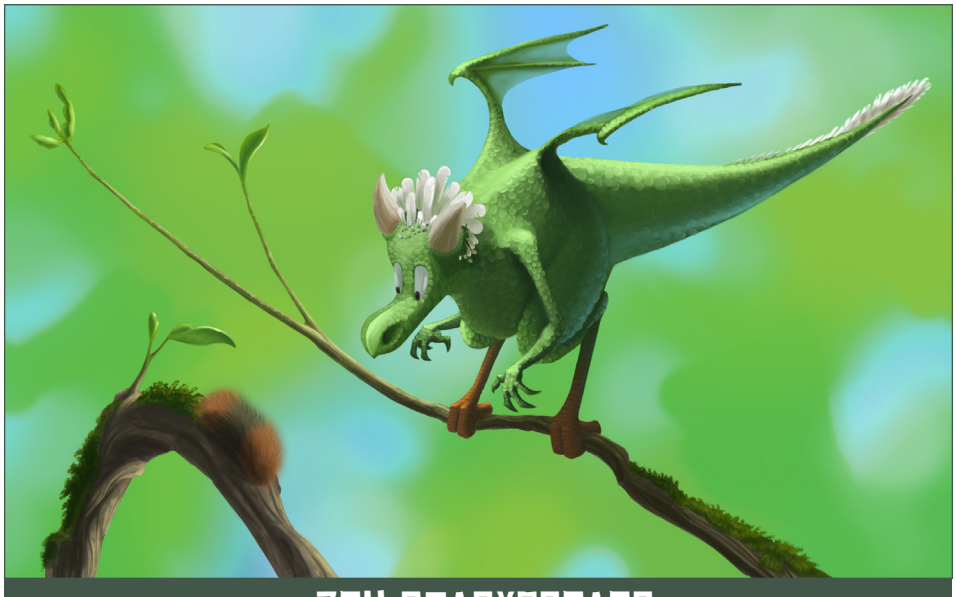
9TH PAWEU paweu@ht.pl



8TH SAWA



8TH THE ANTARCTICAN



7TH SCARYPOTATO

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Funny and humorous entries which break the animal down to its most recognisable components; emphasise these in whichever ways you think best and render your stylised/ abstract/cartoon masterpiece! The rules are pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 2d render (minor post work is okay); it's up to you if you want to have a background or include graphical elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 2DArtist magazine so



6TH DAVENEALE http://www.daveneale.co.uk



5TH CHATE NOIRE http://chatenoire.deviantart.com/gallery



4TH EINEN

if you can create some higher resolution images too, all the better! There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top 3 winners to submit 'Making Of' overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or in 2DArtist magazine. These need to show the stages of your creation, different elements, and some brief explanation text of why, and how, you did what you did. We will format this into some nice-looking pages to give you some great exposure and us some quality content! Each competition will start with one main thread, starting with the brief at the top. All entrants should post all WIPs, give feedback, and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month!



3RD BIGMIKEY
http://www.mike-bohman.com



2ND - ENTROID



1ST - MIGSTA
http://www.miguellleras.com
miguel@miguellleras.com

CHALLENGE THREAD

The entire **DRAGONS!** challenge can be viewed here

The current challenge at the voting stage is:
'BULL IN A CHINA SHOP'

The all-new "SUPER Stylised Challenge" taking place is: **'THE EXECUTIONER!'**

To join the next challenge, or to view previous and/or current entries, please visit:
www.conceptart.org

For the 3d challenge, please visit:
www.threedy.com
Or contact: lynette@zoopublishing.com



3RD SIEGE



2ND NOVISKI

3D CHALLENGE

Here are last month's top entries from the 3d side of the challenge!



1ST SILVATICUS

deathcultlodge@yahoo.com

MAKING OFS

Here are the Making Ofs from last month's top 3 winning entries:

3RD LINBAR

STEP 1:

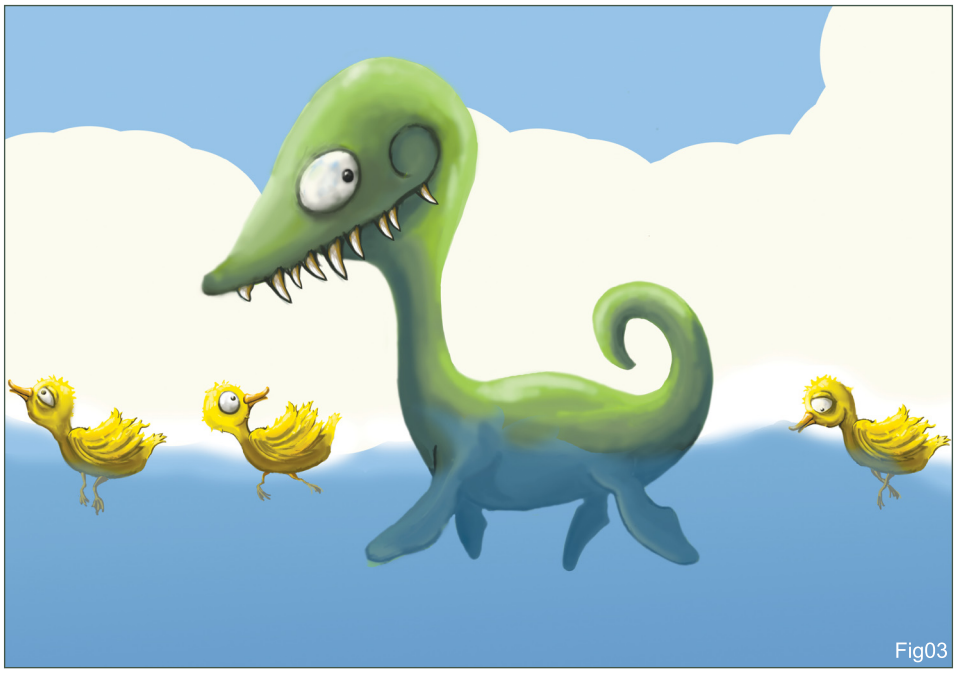
This round I wanted to create a light-hearted painting that would make people smile. I searched the web for images/photos for inspiration. Posters of the animated movie, "Finding Nemo", seemed to make perfect references! I liked the mood of the posters: bright, sunny days and colourful characters. I moved on, sketching out my ideas. Usually, my sketches are quick and rough; I want to explore different compositions and find out whether the idea is interesting on paper. I decided for this idea on a dinosaur living in the present time, trying to fit in with the other animals. I increased the size of thumbnail (**Fig01**) and started painting on it. The line work was all rough and sketchy, but sometimes I do not want to finalise all the small details as a lot interesting ideas will come to me while working on a painting!


Fig01


Fig02

STEP 2:

I started out painting the three yellow ducklings (**Fig02**). Each of the ducklings had their own character and expression. The first duckling was enjoying the sun, while the last duckling was deep in thought, living in his own world. Only the second duckling noticed the dinosaur and was wondering why that "duckling" behind him was so huge?!


Fig03

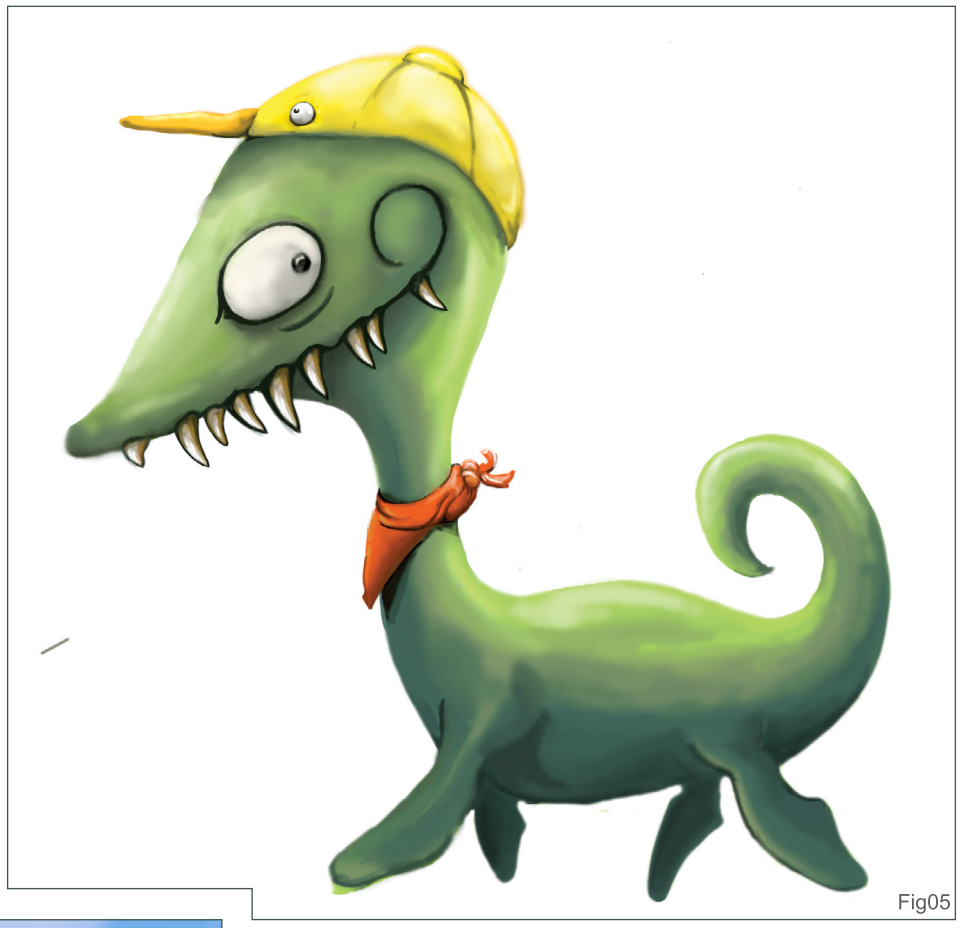
STEP 3:

I went on to paint the dinosaur (**Fig03**). First of all, I filled in the base colour, then I added in shadows, darker tones and lastly the highlights. At this stage, the dinosaur did not look appealing to me. The dinosaur had to be the main point of focus and therefore had to be more eye-catching. I thought, maybe this little dinosaur should try harder to fit in with ducklings...?


Fig04

STEP 4:

I thought of different ideas as I painted the dinosaur (**Fig04**). In the first image (above) the dinosaur had dyed its hair and tied little wings around his neck (I decided this just looked weird!). In the second image, the little dinosaur had eaten a duckling and used the skin and feathers to disguise himself (I thought this was probably too violent!). In the third image, I gave the dinosaur a yellow cap, which I realised suited him quite well! In the last image I changed the little wings to a napkin. The orange/red napkin added more colour variety to overall painting, and with this the dinosaur really stands out. I hid all other layers so it was easier to clean up, and I touched up the dinosaur (**Fig05**).


Fig05

STEP 5:

It was then time to work on the background. I did not spend much time on the clouds – they're just quick and simple. On one layer, I filled the sky with a light blue colour and then created another new layer. Using a white brush to paint the clouds, the opacity of the brush was set to 20%. The clouds further away are obviously less visible. Finally, I played around with the Motion Blur and Gaussian Blur filters to soften the edges. The whole process did not take more than 5 minutes! (**Fig06**)


Fig06

STEP 6:

Moving on to painting the water, I filled one layer with blue as the base colour for the water. The "base colour" layer opacity was set to 65%. I changed the opacity of brush to 20% and painted blocks of dark blue on another layer. The bottom of the water had to be darkest. Again, Motion

Blur and Gaussian Blur filters were used to smooth the edges of the dark blue layer. I then used the Dodge tool and lightened the water closest to the surface. Lastly, I used a white brush and painted waves and water splashes on the surface of water (**Fig07**).

STEP 7:

I painted this art work on one of my computers. However, when I viewed it on another computer I felt the contrast of the whole image was way too high (which could just be down to the monitor settings of my computers!). I decided to adjust the Level and Saturation (**Fig08**), and hopefully it now looks okay on all monitors!

SHU WAN. CHENG

For more work by this artist please visit:
http://chengshuwan.deviantart.com
Or contact them at:
chengshuwan@gmail.com


Fig07


Fig08

2ND MONSTERTREE

STEP 1:

Having decided on creating an Ichthyosaur, I set about looking for good references of the creature. Dinosaurs are, of course, extinct, which means that my primary source of reference had to be fossils. I also found some artists' impressions of the creature, and assembled them into one single handy reference file. Looking at my references I made decisions about how I was going to exaggerate the creature, with a vague idea of my composition and colour scheme (**Fig01**).

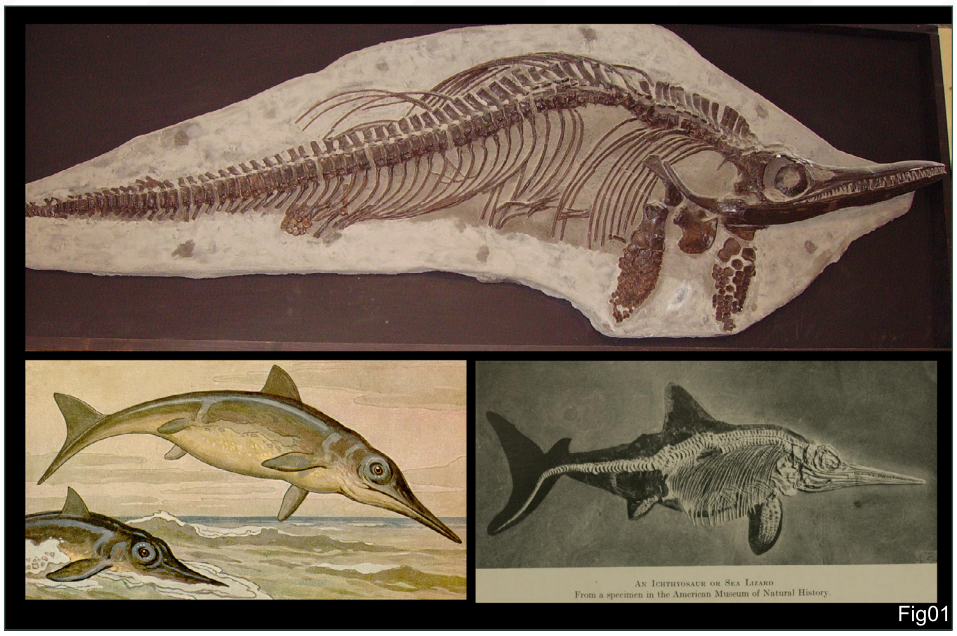
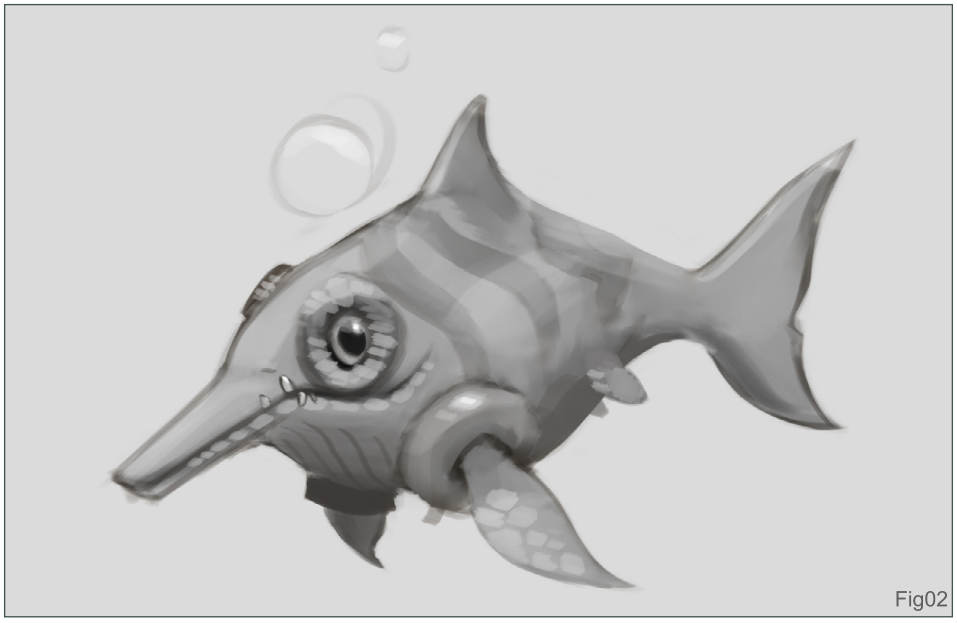


Fig01

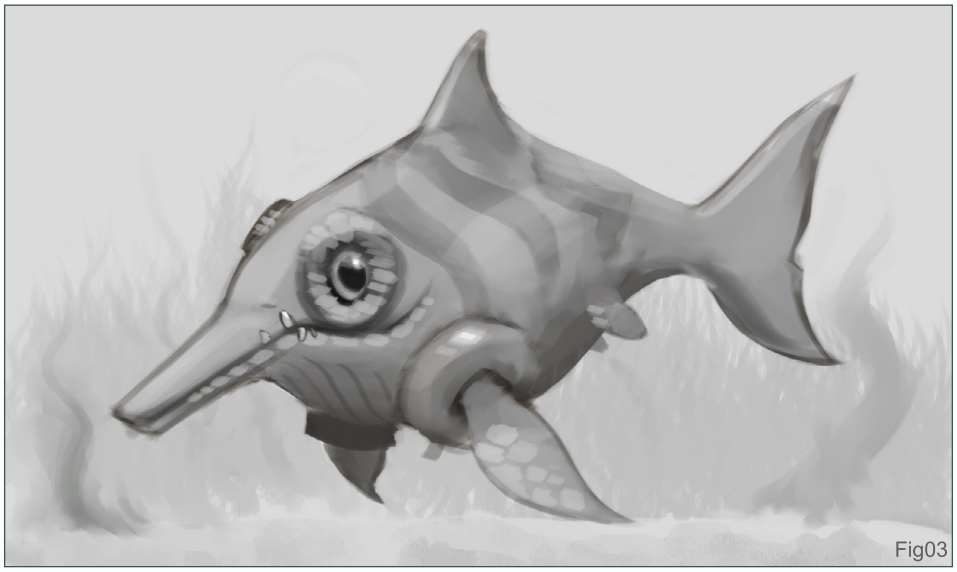
STEP 2

I opened up Photoshop and created an A4-sized document at 300 dpi. I then chose a light shade of grey and filled my document so that it wasn't so glaringly white. Choosing a big, chunky brush from the dry media presets in Photoshop, I doodled a silhouette of my creature, cutting into it or expanding areas until I was happy with the shape. I cropped my image and kept adding transparent layers of black to flesh him out. I also used my background colour to add highlights and accentuate the shapes. My very basic values were laid in at the end of this step (**Fig02**).


Fig02

STEP 3

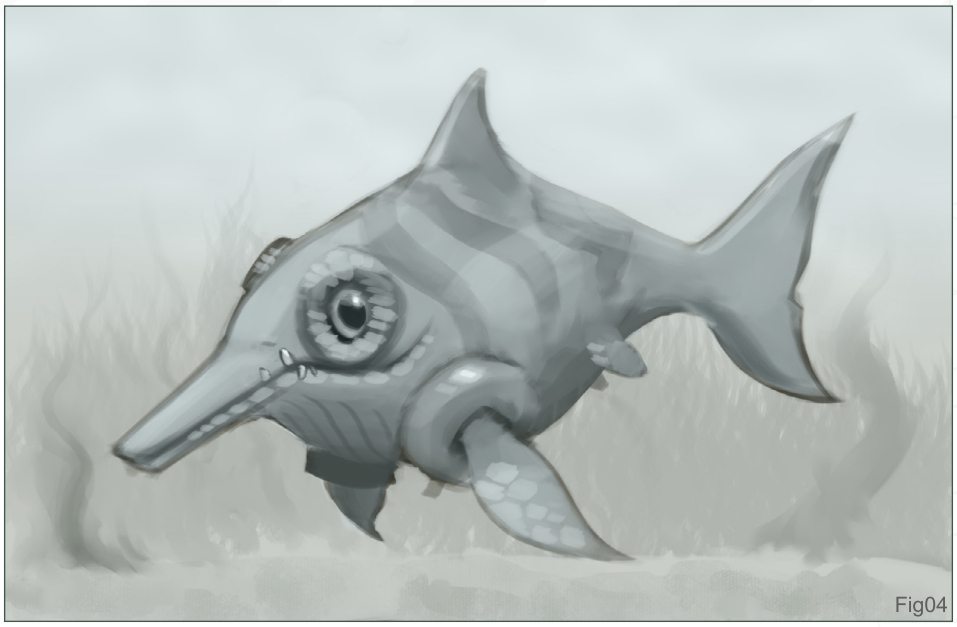
I wanted my dinosaur to be the focus of my image and so I decided that the background should be kept quite simple. I created a brush which was the shape of a single, wavy piece of seaweed. I Quickmasked the 'dino' and painted some light weeds in the background. I also painted some weeds by hand and smudged areas using the Smudge tool. This helped lessen the repetitive nature of the brush preset (**Fig03**).


Fig03

STEP 4:

The scene is set underwater, so the dominant colour in my image was always going to be blue. I created a new layer on top of my black

and white image and set it to Overlay. I then chose a blue that I liked and filled in the layer. This gave the whole image a blue tint whilst preserving the underlying details, much like a glaze when painting traditionally. I lowered the opacity so that the image was not as saturated and erased areas that I feel necessary, such as the light shining through the waves above. Once I was happy I merged the layers (**Fig04**).


Fig04

STEP 5:

I then started introducing more colours into the piece. I painted my image using my chosen colours, but applying them transparently. Even though I knew that I wanted my final image to be really saturated, building my painting from an unsaturated base allowed me to control the specific areas that would be saturated, and those that would not be (**Fig05**).


Fig05

STEP 6:

I carried on tweaking at this stage, adding hues, such as the darker blue on the fins and belly. I worked on the form a little more by making the areas hit by light a little more saturated (**Fig06**).

STEP 7

This was the stage that is hardest to document, because things happen quite quickly and a lot of decisions are made. Simply put, this stage was the fun painting part! Using the same colours I was applying transparently before, I applied colour opaquely and built up the saturation of the image. I tried to keep unlit areas less saturated and more blue, and lit areas were much more saturated with less of the under painting showing through. Using a wet-edged brush, I quickly drew some plant-like shapes in the background. Again, I was watching my saturation; closer objects were kept more saturated than the ones further away (**Fig07**).


Fig06

STEP 8:

Once I was happy with the majority of the image, I decided to make a few last-minute

changes, like tilting the beak upwards and playing with the Levels to give the image more contrast. I painted in some lighter colours to give it more of a 'pop' effect, and I added details like the wrinkles, the anchor on the arm bands, and some scales. I decided to add some more scales by creating an Overlay layer and using a custom brush to create some more subtle scales. With a few more adjustments of the Brightness/Contrast, and my image was finished! (**Fig08**)


Fig07

GEORGE BLETSIS

For more work by this artist please visit:
http://www.monstertree.blogspot.com
Or contact them at:
george@monstertree.com


Fig08

1ST CHUCK.MATE

STEP 1:

I started off by sorting through the references provided by 2DArtist, and I made decisions about what type of Water Dinosaur I wanted to portray, and more or less what it was that I wanted to paint – composition, colours, and style-wise. I opened up a new document in Photoshop and loosely sketched the general shapes of my dino using a PS standard round brush, with hard-edges. I drew with a light colour, which in this case was a kind of light red/burgundy colour, so I could do a more finished drawing of it all, with blacks on top of it, later on. I made sure I conveyed a certain mood and pose at this early stage, to give my creature some vitality in its action (**Fig01**).

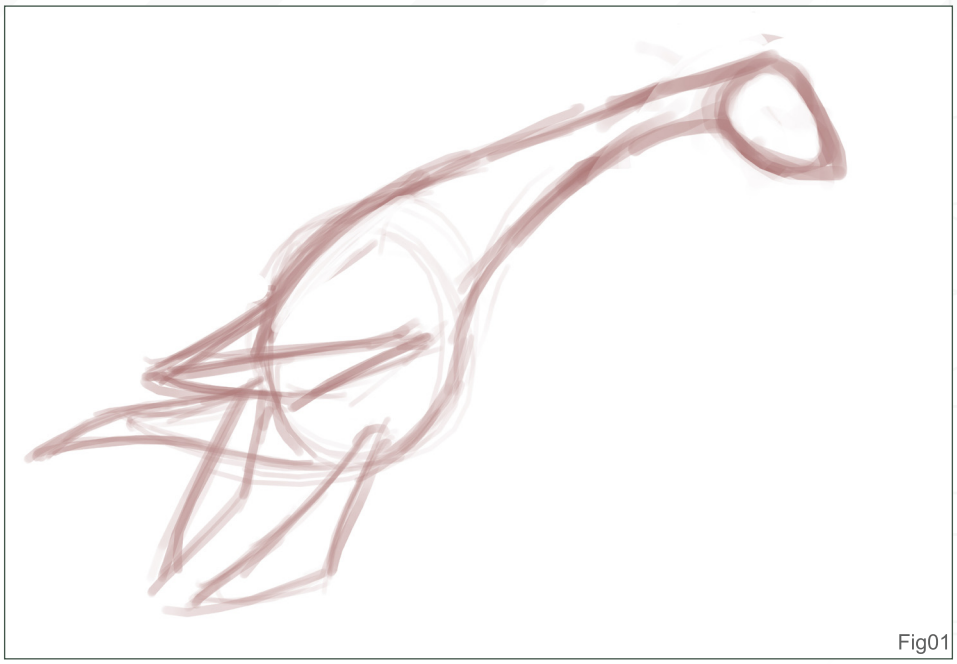


Fig01

STEP 2:

On a new layer I drew my dino from head to toe… I mean, tail. I started off with the head, where I believe character is established first and foremost. I gave him a happy-go-lucky face and kept my lines clean, but not pedantically clean – just enough for it to show a good finished line art! At this stage I also determined some patterns, bumps and spots on the face that would later occur consistently all over the creature (**Fig02**).

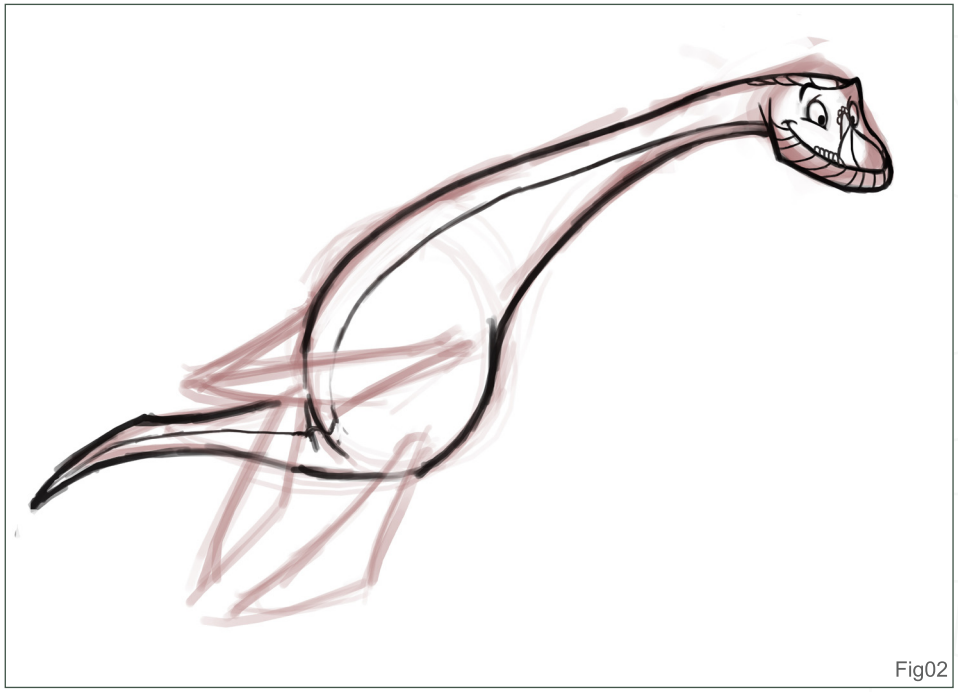


Fig02

STEP 3:

At this point I had finished line art, with versatile line weight to keep things interesting. I'd created a good, solid character, and I was happy with the pose and attitude. I added another character to the scene to give my main figure some balance, a focal point and, well… a buddy! This came in the form of some sort of ancient blow-fish.

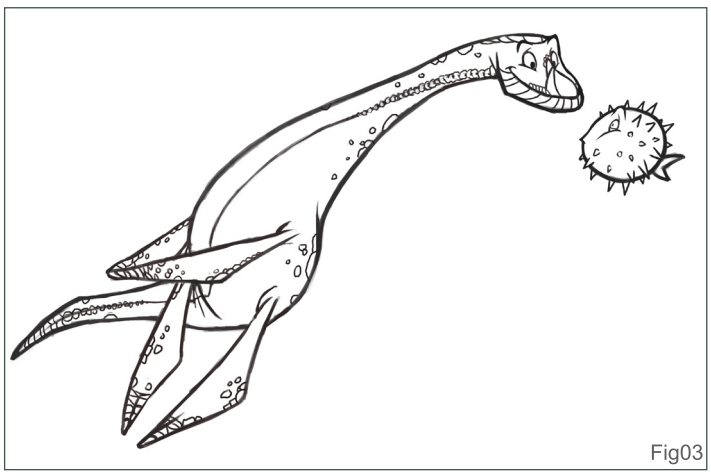


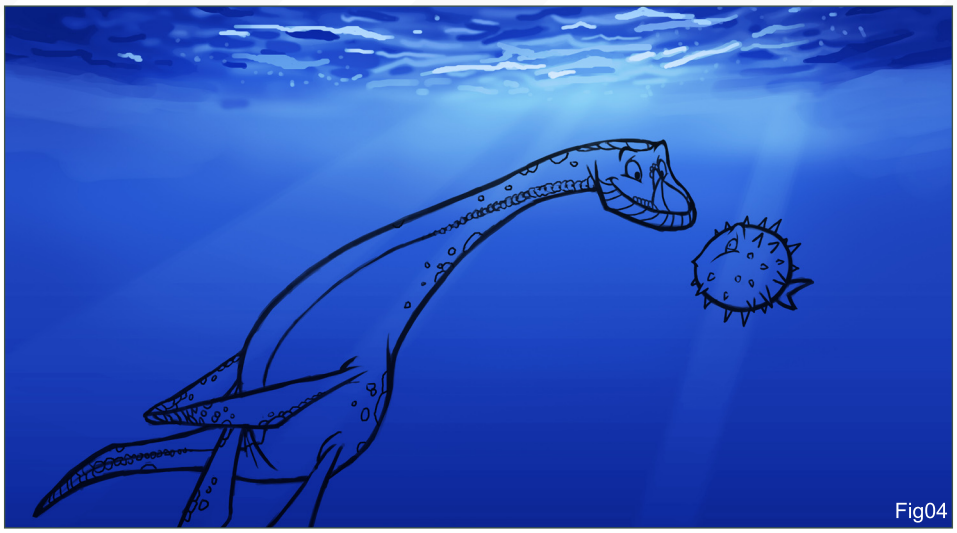
Fig03

As you can see, the 'spots and bumps' pattern started on the fins, the neck and the tail, as well as on the head that I started with (**Fig03**).

STEP 4:

Keeping my line art on a 'Multiply' layer, I created a new layer underneath it and painted a quick background. I used the Gradient tool to establish a light source (light from above; darker at the bottom of the ocean), and

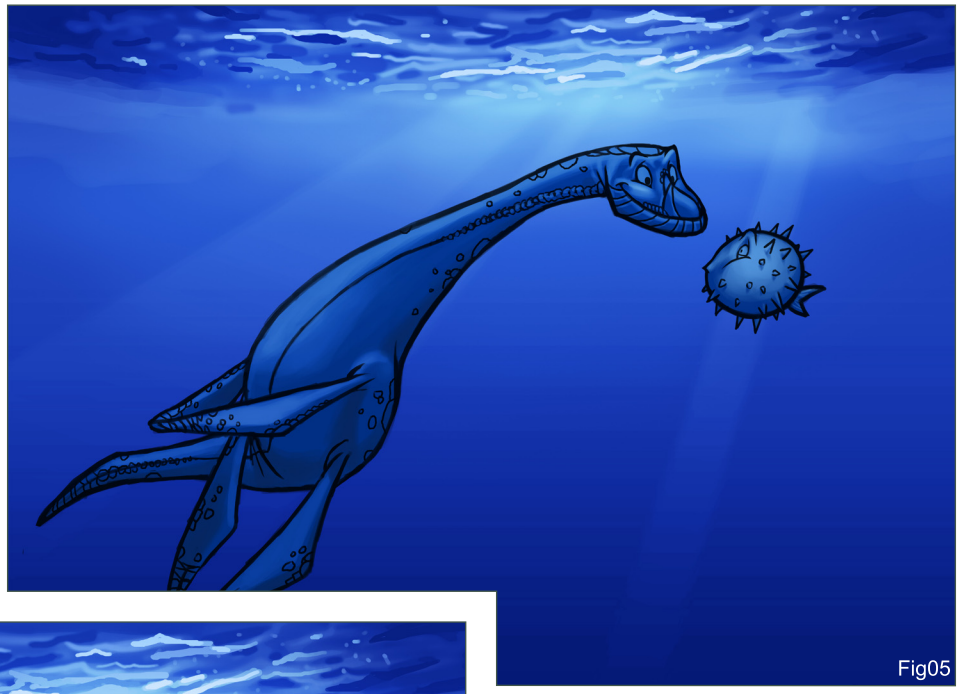
then I painted in the water surface using a round brush, hard-edged. Some highly feathered selections, and the Gradient tool applied to them, made the soft beams of light pierce the water's surface (**Fig04**).


Fig04

STEP 5

On a new layer, between the line art layer and the background layer, I filled in a mid-tone of the bluish colour. Then, with a round brush, I started painting in the light and shade of my figures' forms. The deeper down in the ocean you go, the darker it gets.

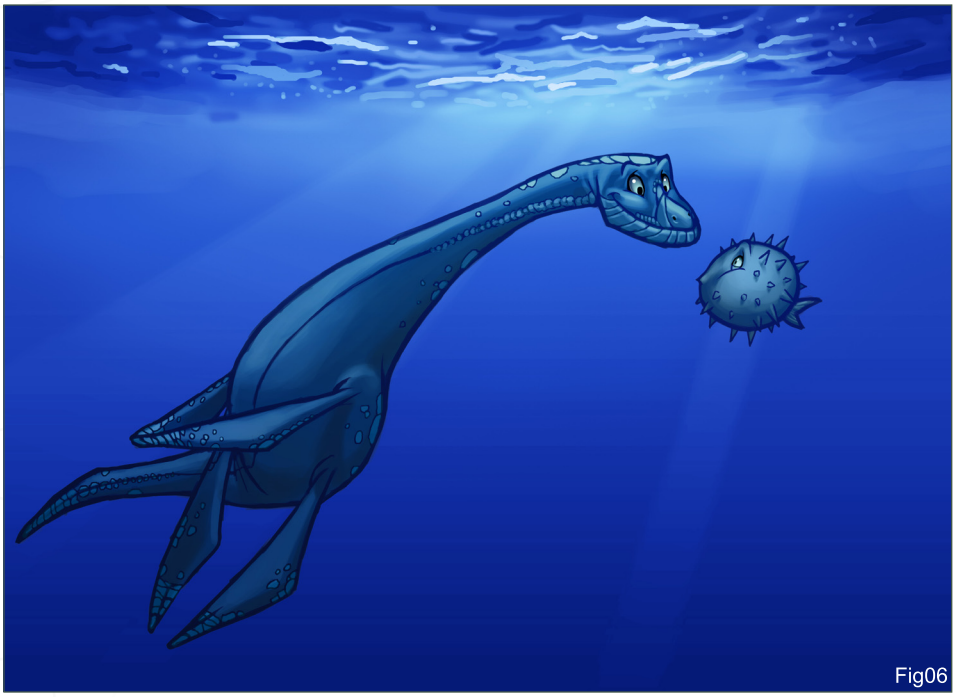
The blow-fish was tinted with a little green on a Colour layer, just to differ it a little from the main figure (**Fig05**).


Fig05

STEP 6:

In this stage I painted my black line art with a lighter colour – a bluish-green one – and left out all of the parts of the line art that I wanted to be black, such as the eyes of my dino and blow-fish. I merged all my layers and paint in my characters' eyes first, giving them that glossy/wet look.

On a new layer, I painted in the dino's spots and bumps in a slightly lighter colour. Some minor detail for the light and shade was also added here, as well (**Fig06**).


Fig06

STEP 7:

On a new Overlay layer I painted in the caustic light effect from the above-water surface on my dino and his little buddy. I used white on this Overlay layer, which acted as brush of "light", if you like, without affecting my colour choices and making them brighter (**Fig07**).

With a custom brush of spots and texture, I further painted in my background, the water surface above, and some bubbles in motion for the dinosaur's back legs and tail. On another

Overlay layer, I painted in some bouncing light at the bottom of my figures, giving them some extra “realism” in their shape and form. Finally, I painted in some other dinosaur silhouettes in the far background, just to add more depth to my image’s sense of space. As a final touch, I filled a new layer of Colour with a somewhat purplish hue, and lowered the opacity to about 10-11%, just to bind all the colour palette together a bit. And that’s about it – done!

PATRI BALANOVSKY

For more work by this artist please visit:
http://www.chuckmate.blogspot.com/
Or contact them at:
pat2003b@yahoo.com



Fig07





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Custom Brushes

"My idea was to make a texture that would help me to achieve a 'dreamy' sky for my drawing..."



This month, Ignacio Bazán Lazcano takes an interesting-looking texture to create a custom brush for this month's tutorial...

Custom Brushes

CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop CS2

The idea is to find an interesting texture or photograph in order to make a paintbrush that will help us to achieve special effects in our illustration. In this case, I was aiming for an effect for some clouds and rocks, and so I took a photograph of different kinds of stones; the more creative shapes that we find in a photo, the better the outcome will be from our paintbrush for this type of effect!

My idea was to make a texture that would help me to achieve a 'dreamy' sky for my drawing. If you are drawing, it's much better to know what you want to get from your paintbrush. I like to work on my backgrounds a lot, and so this is the reason why I take my time planning my paintbrushes before starting to paint (**Fig01**).

The first step is to take the photo and then desaturate it towards grey tones. Afterwards, you can then duplicate it. We can do this by go to Menu > Image > Adjustments > Desaturate. Once you have the same photo twice, select


Fig01



Fig02


Fig03


Fig04

the second layer where the original copy of our photo can be found. Change its shape mode by selecting "Color burn", above your layer, from the upper left pull-down menu (**Fig02**).

You can now select an area from the photo that you like the most, and that you think will make an interesting brush. Go to the tool bar and choose the Lasso Tool (Feather = 20%), and then cut out your desired area and paste it onto a new document (Ctrl + C + N + V) (**Fig03**).

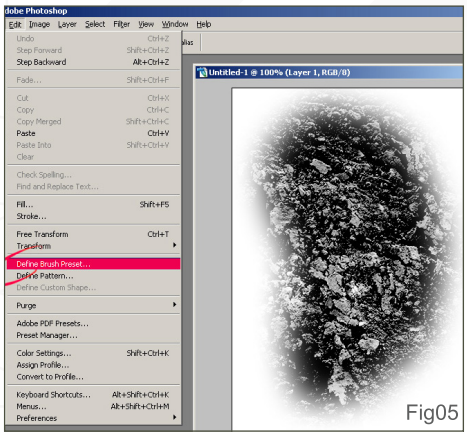
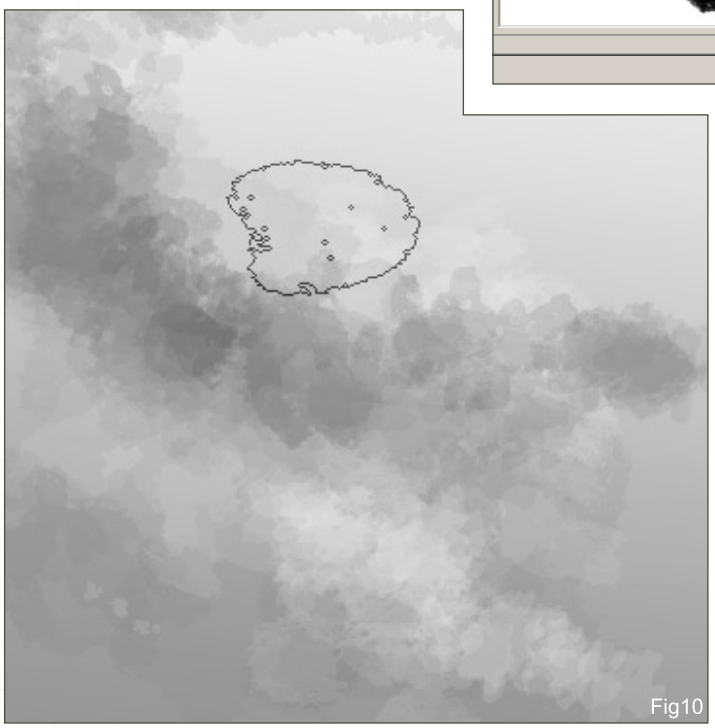


Fig05

You can see how the new paintbrush is being defined already (**Fig04**).

Once you have the paintbrush in a new file, you have to make it part of your Photoshop brush collection. So, to do this, go to Edit > Define Brush Preset (**Fig05**). You have now saved the new paintbrush, and now you can shape it and play with the settings in order to get the effects that you want from your very own brush for your personal, unique ideas!

When we create our paintbrushes, we don't just achieve a higher level of illustration, but we can also create a unique masterpiece with special attributes. I usually use six or seven paintbrushes every time I paint something!


Fig10

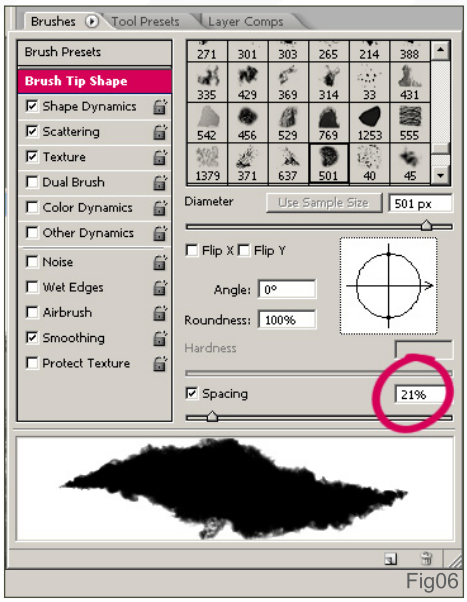


Fig06

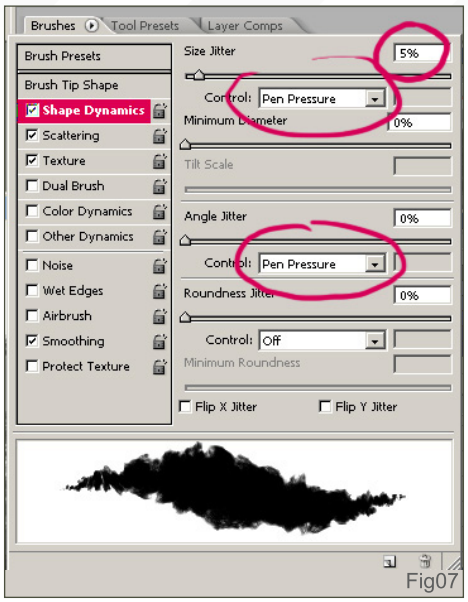


Fig07

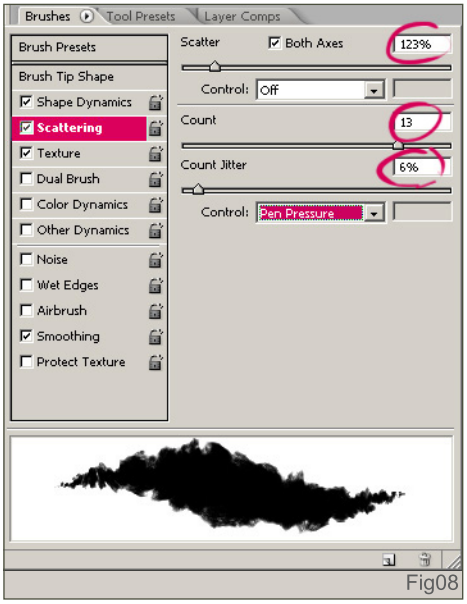


Fig08

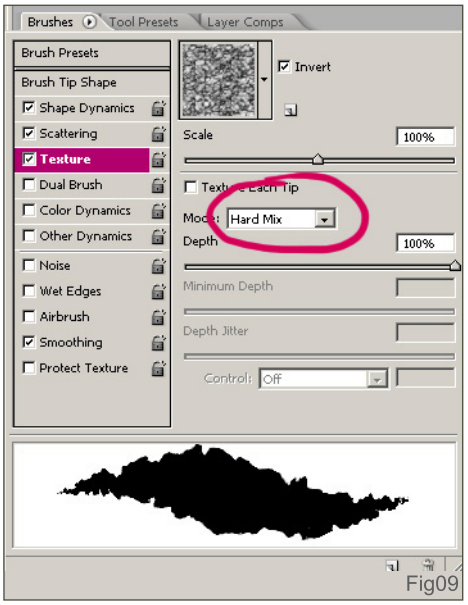


Fig09

Go to the Brush tab and copy these settings for this brush:

Brush Tip Shape (**Fig06**): Spacing 21%

Shape Dynamics (**Fig07**): Size Jitter 5% and select Pen Pressure; Angle Jitter 0% and select Pen Pressure

Scattering (**Fig08**): Scatter 123%, Count 13, Count Jitter 6% and select Pen Pressure

Texture (**Fig09**): Select a random texture and change the Mode to Hard Mix; Smoothing > On

This is a mini example of how the new brush has been used in the design of a cloud (**Fig10**). And that's all you have to do! In the next picture, you can see how our paintbrush really gets to work, especially on the sky and for the stones (**Fig11**). I hope you will learn something from this tutorial and that you can apply the technique to your very own practice. Now, why not get started on your own custom brushes?



IGNACIO BAZÁN LAZCANO

For more from this artist visit:

http://www.neisbeis.deviantart.com

Or contact:

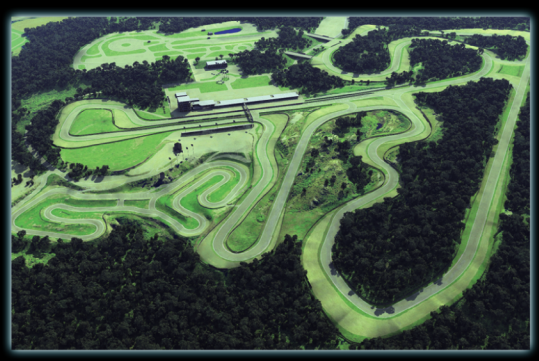
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Fig11









Pictures by Eran Dinur, Dragos Jieanu, Jørgen Holo, Ken Wellings

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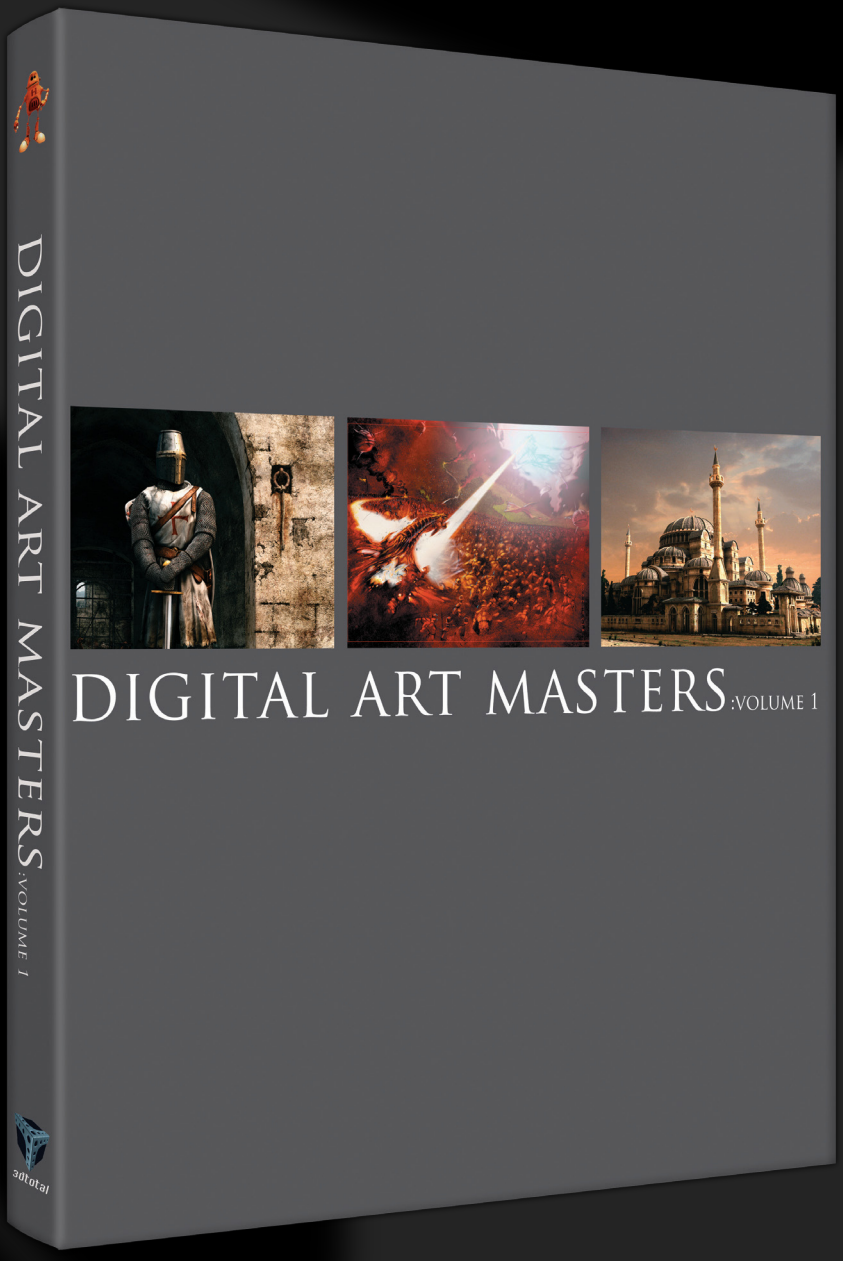
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Digital Art Masters

: volume 1



Introduction:

The 'Digital Art Masters: volume 1' book, is a collection of work from artists which have featured in the gallery of 3DTotal. Spread over 192 pages, the book features some of the finest digital 2D and 3D artwork that you can see today, from artist as Natascha Roeoesli, Philip Straub, Rob Chang, Jesse Sandifer, PiSONG, Meny Hilsenrad and Ryan Lim and many more. More than just any other gallery book, each artist has written a breakdown overview, each with supporting imagery of how they made there piece of work.



The first book in the "Digital Art Masters" series, contains work by the following artists:

André Holzmeister, Andrey Yamkovoy, Balazs Kiss, Cetin Tuker, Daniele Montella, d'Ettorre Olivier-Thomas, Donald Phan, Drazenka Kimpel, Egil Paulsen, Eric Wilkerson, Fabricio Micheli, Francisco Ferriz, Fred Bastide, Fredrik Alfredsson, Haure Sebastien, Jesse Sandifer, Jorge Adorni, Juan J. González, Juliano Castro, Khalid Abdulla Al-Muharraqi, Landis Fields, Laurent Gaumer, Laurent Ménabé, Li Suli, Linda Tso, Marcel Baumann, Marco Siegel, Mariska Vos, Meny, Hilsenrad, Natascha Roeoesli, Nicolas Richelet, Niels Sinke, Norbert Fuchs, Olli Sorjonen, Omar Sarmiento, Patrick Beaulieu, Philip Straub, PiSONG, Richard Tilbury, Rob Adams, Robert Chang, Romain Côte, Ronnie Olsthoorn, Rudolf Herczog, Ryan Lim, Siku and Thierry Canon

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Speed Painting

Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. We've asked two artists this month to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes.

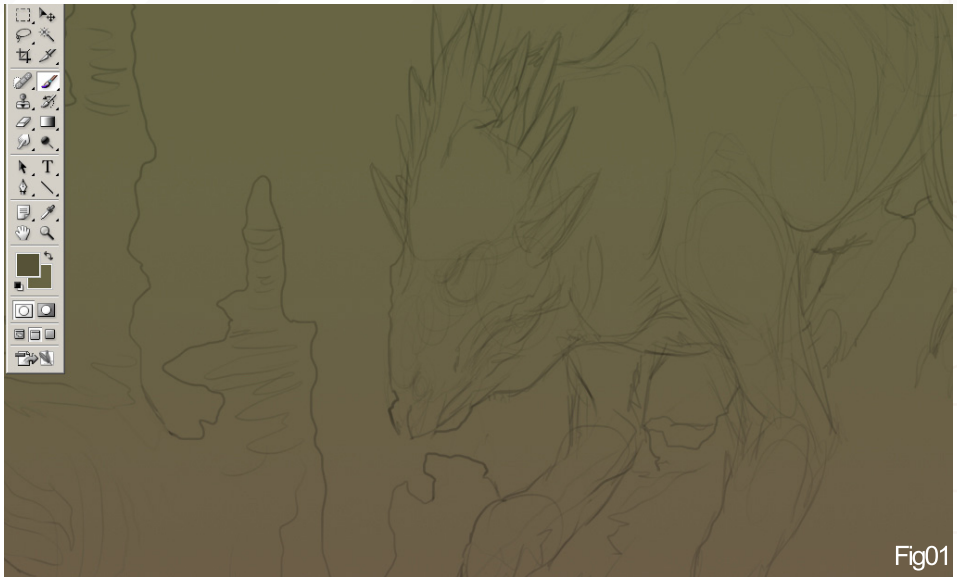
This month our talented artists, Mike Corriero and Richard Tilbury, tackle the topic:

THE BEAST WAS POISED READY TO STRIKE!

MIKE CORRIERO

INTRODUCTION:

The key to speed painting is textures; unique patterns and shapes; the suggestion of forms without too much detail, and a good sense of light and direction. If you're going to try to communicate an image without rendering out forms in detail, the use of custom brushes and textures will help sell the conceptual idea of an object. You need to captivate the viewer with interesting details that don't have to be hand-painted one by one. These details don't have to be your conventional method of thinking and can quite often be more abstract or intricate.


Fig01

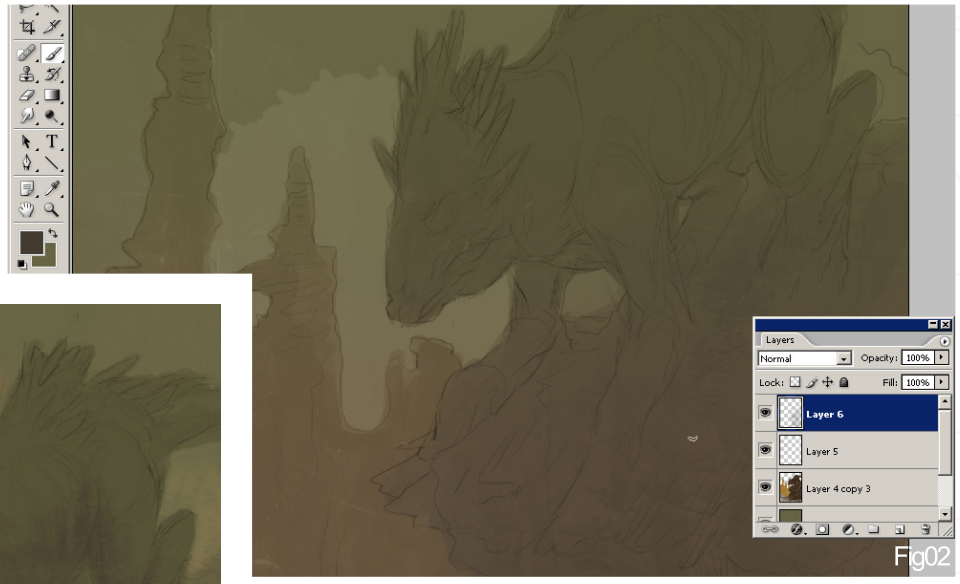


Fig02


Fig03

QUICK SKETCH

A quick line sketch, which doesn't need to be detailed, will help keep you on track but will also leave enough room for creative changes. I'm not even going to bother worrying about getting the anatomy down correctly or adding things like eyes or defining the forms; I'm just laying down a quick gradient fill on a Multiply layer (**Fig01**).

SEPARATION OF PLANES AND ELEMENTS

Sticking to the Multiply layer so the sketch will still show through, I'm separating the main elements which exist on a couple of different planes with varying colours and values. The suggestion of a light source is thrown into place. It can often give you an interesting effect if you paint on a new layer and, instead of trying to fill in the elements, you use the eraser to carve them out after painting over the lines. Leaving a couple of specks which aren't fully erased is okay and will just make the image a bit more interesting and gritty! (**Fig02**)

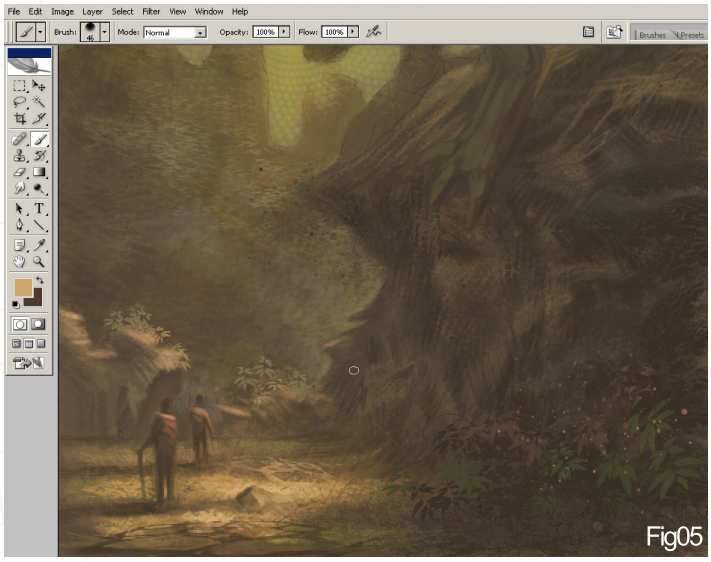
TEXTURING WITH CUSTOM BRUSHES

With the use of custom brushes, I'm taking a bit of creative leeway to make some areas a bit more interesting with suggestive abstract patterns. In the foreground and background I'm using some brushes to lay in texture effects to the rocks and ground. Switching the size of your brush from large to a very fine small point can also be effective in speed painting details (**Fig03**).

FOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

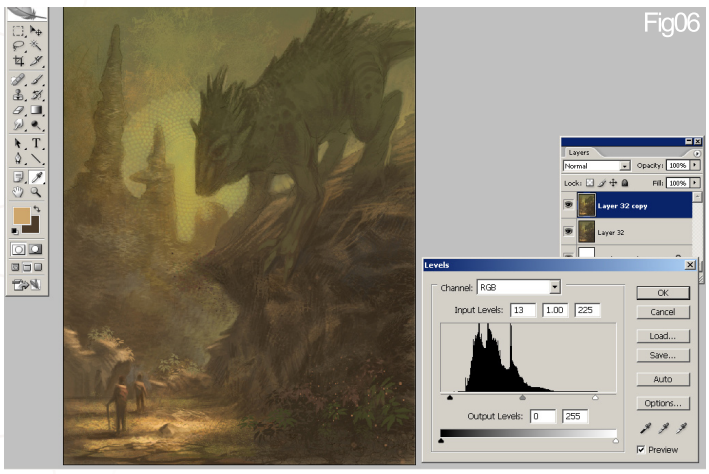
Highlighting areas you want the viewer to focus in on, and muting areas that aren't important, will make the image much easier to read and more interesting. The sky, although unconventional, has some added texture that can be construed as light from the sun. A higher saturation of colour and higher contrast in value will always draw more attention than areas left in a dark shadow. This is why the two most important parts of this image are either framed by a highlighted shape or located where a higher concentration of saturated colours are. These two elements, being the creature's head and the unsuspecting prey (humans), are located on the ground plane (**Fig04**).


Fig04


Fig05

PASSAGE AND CHARACTERS

I'm starting to define a few areas now to make a bit more sense of them. Our two characters have been given a quick touch of highlights and colour to suggest the light that is hitting the plane they are on. I've also opened up a passage-way to suggest the path in which they are headed. This pathway helps 'pop-out' the characters with some dark values against the highlighted values. Specks of dust, leaves and some added break up to the ground, are all done with custom brushes and the scatter option (**Fig05**).


Fig06

ADJUSTING THE VALUES

A quick fix and change to the values helps give a better perspective of the colours in use and how to define the shapes. In duplicating the level, you can erase areas that you don't want to become too saturated or areas you want to remain darker or more muted. Sliding the black arrow to the right, and the white arrow to the left, will give you a broader range in values on the level adjustment table. In doing this, you will also inadvertently pump up the saturation of these areas (**Fig06**).

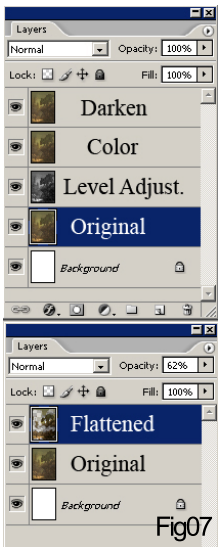


Fig07

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR LEVELS

The layer options make it easier to adjust the levels without completely losing the colour and details. First, make a duplicated layer of the original. Next, desaturate the layer to greyscale and choose the auto level adjustment option under Image > Adjustments > Auto Levels. This will automatically adjust your image to the most compatible dark and light values located within the painting. Now take the original layer, place a duplicate on top of the greyscale version and choose 'Color' for the layer option. Finally, create another duplicate and place that at the top of every layer, setting the layer option to 'Darken'. Flatten the layers, copy and paste it on top of the original, and erase out the areas which are too dark/too saturated, and lower the overall opacity a bit. These are all quick adjustments to fix the colour, hues, saturation and values to really bring out the best quality of the image (**Fig07**).


Fig08

TIGHTENING THE KEY ELEMENTS

After having adjusted the values and saturation I've started to define the silhouette of the creature while adding some texture and details, especially toward the head region. I've chosen to make the eye a bright orange to compliment the colour scheme and to tie in the colours of the characters with the creature, while adding some elements of floating leaves and petals (**Fig08**).

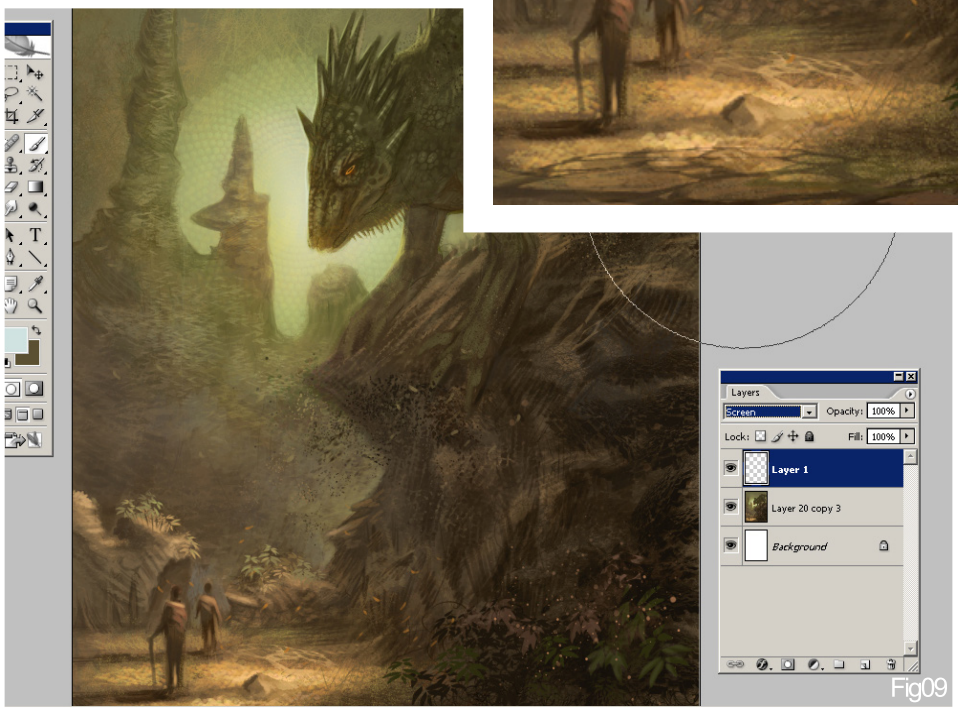
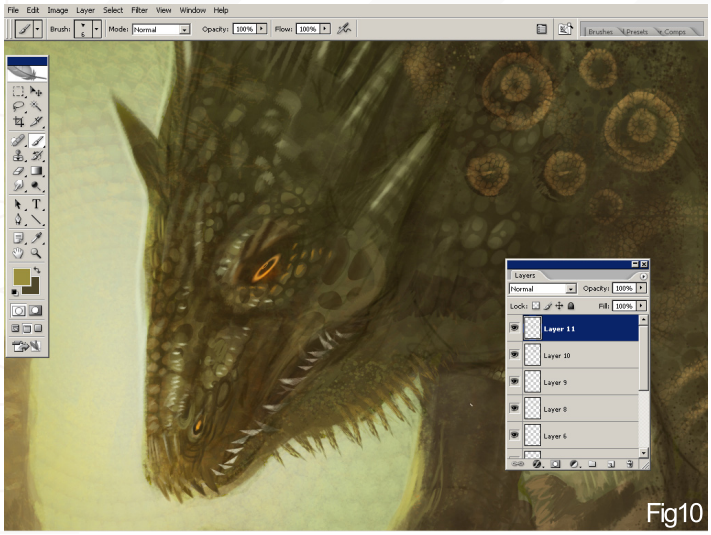
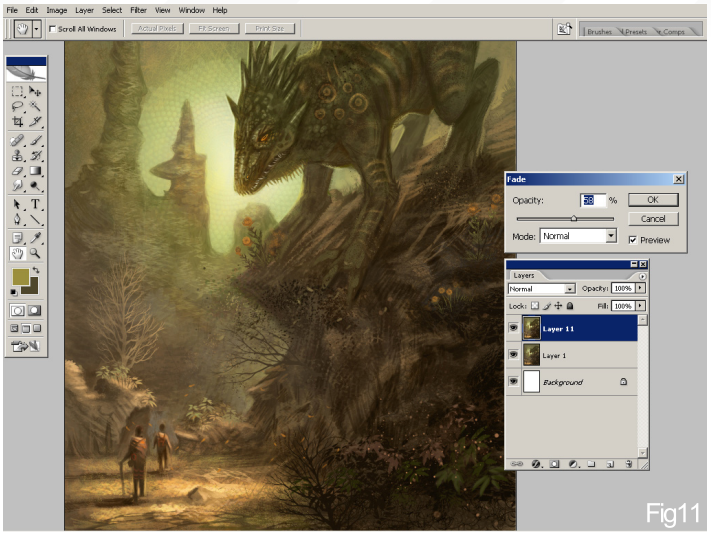


Fig09

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

On two new layers I'm using the Screen and Overlay options to boost the value and colour of the Sun. I still want the patterned effect to show through and I want the beast's head to


Fig10


Fig11

be visible but obtain a warmer glow from the light. Erasing out a couple of areas and carving out the silhouette of the creature will set my sunlight in place without covering the important elements. This is really going to help frame the head of the creature and draw more attention to this area (**Fig09**).

I had worked on adding some scaly texture to the beast's body, but the only area that really needs a bit of extra attention is the face. Zooming in I'm just adding some highlights on the scales, fitting him with some teeth to make him a bit more menacing and geared up to attack his prey. I've also provided him with a bit of a pattern again, using the green and orange colour scheme. A lot of these little details are often painted on their own layers for quick adjustments and editing options (**Fig10**).

FOLIAGE AND FINE-TUNING

Once again, on a duplicated layer, I'm making another adjustment that will be lowered in opacity and portions erased. Under the Image > Adjustments > Auto Contrast option I've given the saturation and values one last tweak to bring out all the colour and highlights. The characters have been fine-tuned a little to make their bodies a bit more easy to read, without detailing them too much. Using some custom brushes created by another artist I'm providing some flowers, extra foliage, falling


Fig12

rocks, trees and branches. These little elements are suggestive and help complete the environment with some lush additional life (**Fig11**).

THE FINAL

Taking a look at the final image as a whole, I'll probably make a few last minute additions and minor changes, but I think the important details are defined in the focal points and the overall colour and textures are working to the advantage of the concept. The warm tones and direction of the elements, as well as the strong complimentary colour scheme, really provide the look I was going for which brings out a lot of drama and mood. That's all for this piece; most of the custom brushes I used were created by Barontieri, Daarken and M@ (**Fig12**).

MIKE CORRIERO

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For more from Mike Corriero, check out Part One of his in-depth tutorial series on '**Creature Concept Design**' in this very issue of 2DArtist!

RICHARD TILBURY

INTRODUCTION

For this month's tutorial I did not have a clear picture in my mind before starting. I usually have a vague notion as to how the image may look, but in this case I really did not know what I was going to do. I had imagined a few compositions but was not happy with any, and so I literally started without any idea as to how the image would evolve. It was an interesting experiment as I started to put down random, large sweeping shapes in a purely abstract fashion. It was within minutes that I saw a composition and the concept was born (**Fig01**).


Fig01

BUILDING THE STRUCTURE

You can hopefully see in **Fig01** that there are some architectural structures and the silhouette of a lone figure wearing a robe. The diagonal shape intersecting him was to be a raised walkway upon which I would paint my "beast", who would eventually be about to leap onto the character and do whatever beasties do – ATTACK!! The robe suggested a religious figure and so I gave him a hat in the manner worn by a high priest or bishop, for example. You can see that, as I was forming


Fig02


Fig03


Fig04

the composition, I was intuitively developing a narrative. This is not a necessary part of the artistic process but it can help structure the image in terms of mood, colour schemes, perspective, etc. As the character was to be of a religious nature, I imagined that the beast was an assassin sent by an unknown assailant – maybe someone of a different faction or faith, or perhaps a politically motivated person. Whatever the reason, the idea was now tangible enough to illustrate the title.

In **Fig02** you can see that I have now refined the initial shapes and developed the tonal range. I decided to make the foreground dark, maybe in the shadow of towering columns or buildings, and the background would show tall buildings bleached out against a bright sunlit sky. I have painted in the beast, who is ominously shadowed by the architecture around him, almost camouflaged. Its gaze is aimed downwards, focusing on the target below; its knees slightly bent and ready to leap. The priest has his arms crossed in an authoritative manner, unaware of his impending doom.

COLOUR SCHEME

The essential components of the image have now been established and it is time to add some colour to the scene. I added a warm brown across the foreground as a Soft Light mode on a separate layer, and added a similar colour across the background but this time setting the blending mode to Hard Light. The result can be seen in **Fig03** where the towering buildings in the background now appear faded and warm in the distant sunlight. The overall palette is warm and I decided to echo this in the foreground also, to help bind the different spaces and suggest a strong source of light.


Fig05


Fig06


Fig07


Fig08

ADDING DETAIL AND TEXTURE

The picture now has some colour and so it is time to start putting in a few details to suggest some of the textures in the materials. I decided to use a standard Chalk brush and focus on the near doorway and wall supporting the priest (**Fig04**). You can see where the textured brush has been used to help describe the stonework, and I have also defined the background buildings as well as increasing the intensity of the sky. The doorway in the near foreground still looked a little undefined at this stage so I suggested an entrance, and for interest I placed a light above it which would softly illuminate some detailing down the right side. I used a white with the Layer Style 'Outer Glow', and then applied a green colour on a new layer set to Overlay to show the reflected light on the door frame and interior wall (**Fig05**).

These small areas of textured canvas help suggest details without the need to illustrate them, but at this point the image needed a more clearly defined beast as this was the subject of the title. I kept this on a separate layer just so I could make quick alterations if need be. I painted a more defined silhouette to start with and then added some subtle highlights to add volume, as well as some demonic green eyes (**Fig06**). I painted a purple colour across the priests robes to also help make him a focal point. At this point, whenever I looked at him, I kept seeing Admiral Ackbar from Return Of The Jedi (I think it must have been the shape and colour of his head!).

Time for a costume change: I added some definition to his robe, toned down the colour scheme and turned him into a human (**Fig07**).

FINAL STAGES

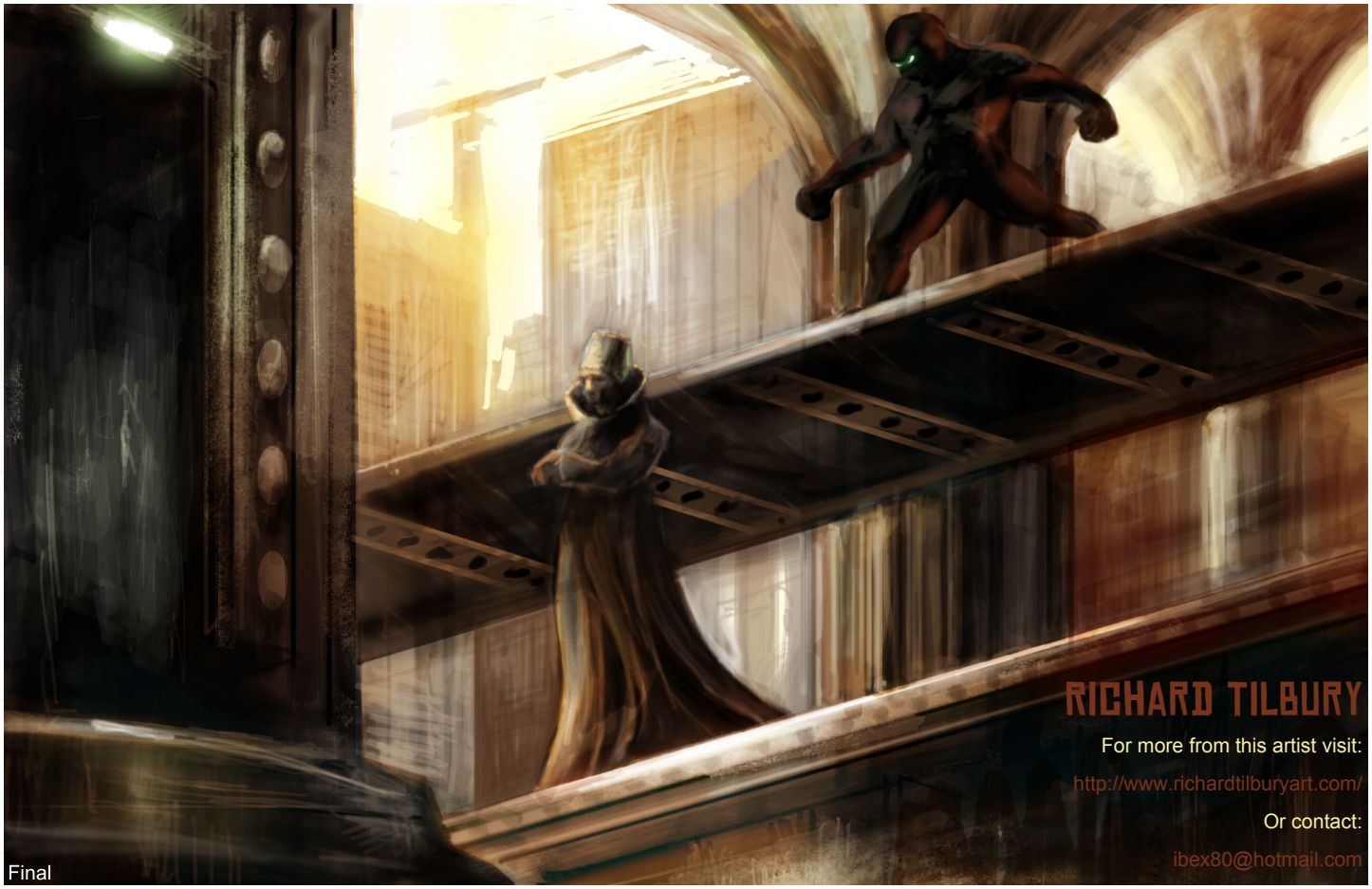
The priest now at least looked more human and so, with the overall image at semi-finished stage, it was time to tie-up any loose ends and add some final refinements before calling it a day, so to speak.

You can see in **Fig08** that the background buildings have been made less orange and instead I have focused the more saturated areas around their tops, as though the sunlight was just clipping them. I also swapped the warmer foreground colour to a cooler hue, leaning towards the green and blues, but this just did not seem to work somehow and neither did the support struts under the raised walkway – changes were therefore needed!

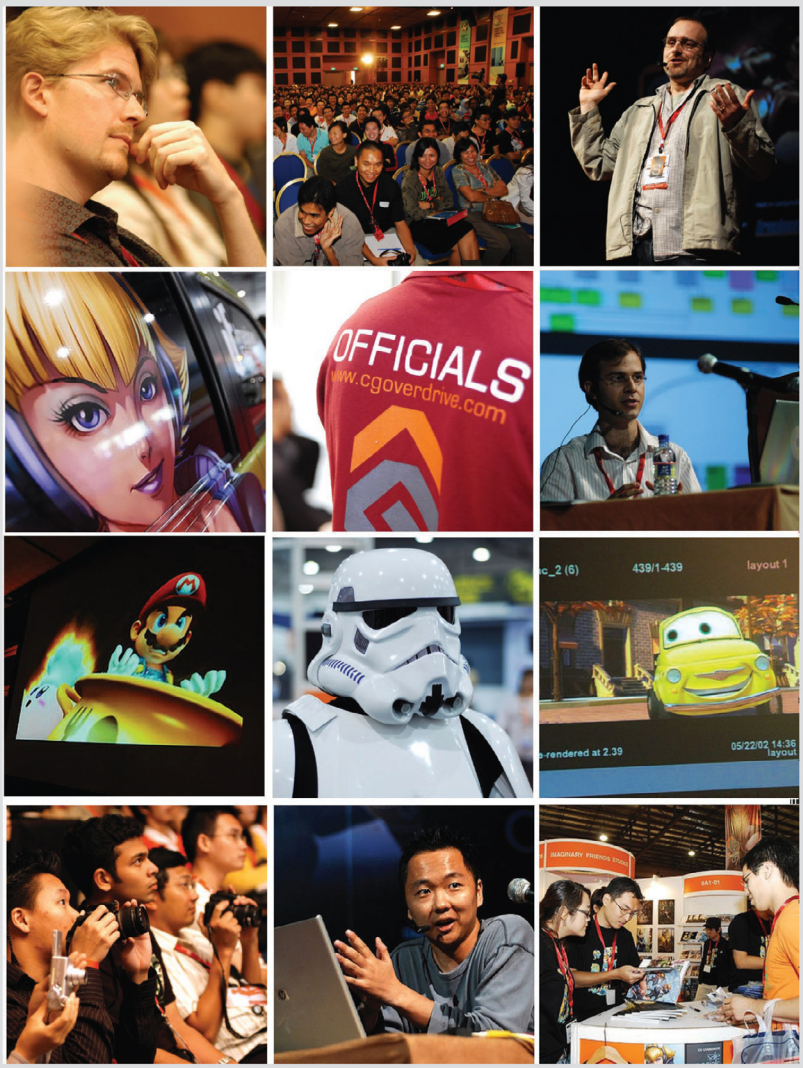
First of all, I changed the perspective of the struts because they were clearly wrong, and then I set about unifying the picture a little more. I added a further warm tone set to Multiply across all the foreground objects and then erased into it around the doorway light. I also moved the creature right and scaled him down a tad, so as to keep the perspective more accurate – this is precisely why having elements on separate layers can be valuable sometimes! One final adjustment was a Soft Light highlight under the priest, so as to differentiate the space between this and the near foreground. The final image can be seen here (**Final**).

CONCLUSION

This has been yet another enjoyable learning experience, as are most paintings/drawings. This time around I started without any defined idea in my mind and so improvised from the very beginning. The interesting aspect about working in this way is that the chances are you will arrive at a destination you could not have foreseen beforehand, which makes the process exciting. I am happy with the overall result and like the composition in this one, although, as always, I am keen to explore this further and do a more detailed version in the future. However, I think next time I will choose different eye shapes as I think my beast does unfortunately look somewhat like a 'ninja turtle'!



Final



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Tiberius Viris brings to us the second part of this 5-part Matte Painting Tutorial Series. He will cover basic tasks for all of us that would like to get into doing some matte painting, as well as covering some more advanced aspects...

In this part, Tiberius shows us how to convert a sunny image into a snow scene! Enjoy...

matte painting
sunshine to snow

CREATED IN:

Photoshop

INTRODUCTION

Greetings, and welcome to the second part of our matte painting tutorial series!

We will continue with another common transformation: season change. Specifically, this month, we'll be turning our base image into a winter scene. This time you will see that things are getting a little bit more challenging! While the process itself is not hard, the difficult part is in finding the right shapes, shades and places for the now, as well as finding a cool (literally) yet still realistic colour palette.

From **Fig01** you can see the 'before' and 'after' results of what we're going to do!


Fig01

WHAT ARE WE AFTER?

So this time, we are after a winter scene. We have again the same raw photo which, as you can see, was taken most likely during the summer, and we want to see how it will look 6 months later... The problem with this photo is that it's full of green trees that will lose their leaves in winter; however, we have no information of what's behind them and we can't recreate that information from other parts of the image (remember we are not allowed to change architecture, so no clone stamp, okay?!). This case is perfect tutorial material, because we will do more than just the average summer to winter; we will see how to get a little creative, even if limited by certain restrictions!

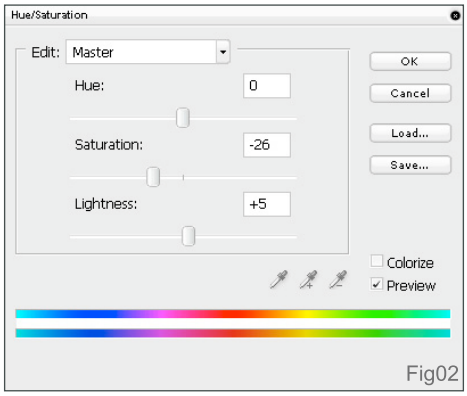


Fig02



Fig03

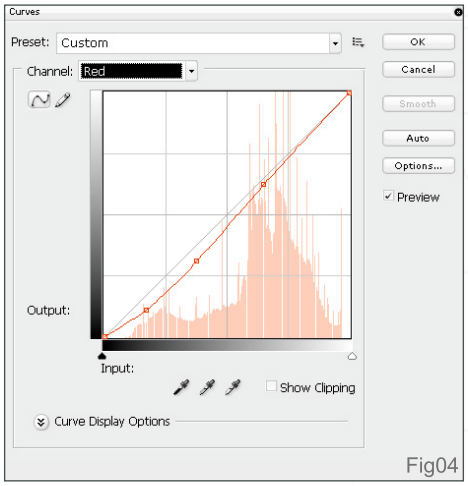


Fig04


Fig05

So let's see what we are supposed to do. Let's say we have two major restrictions:

1 We must not make major alterations to the castle architecture;

2 We should keep the size and placement of all the major elements (such as the river, position of the trees, etc.)

So with all this in mind, I'll start by planning the steps (as I showed you last month):

- Firstly, I should begin by changing the colour palette into a colder and less saturated one. I also want to reduce contrast.

- Right from the beginning I decide to "move" this castle to somewhere in the mountains, which will contribute to the overall cold feel and will give more depth. So for the next step, I want to replace the sky and the background and add in some nice peaks. I also want to remove the big, left foreground tree at this point.

- Then I should consider recreating the mid-areas, especially the group of trees from the left and right of the castle. I should also connect these areas with the background, probably with an in-between forest and some mist. This is a process often referred to as "surgery".

- Then it's time to adjust the front lake/river; give it a frosty look, paint some snow over it, and then paint some snow infront of the castle.

- When all this is done we should start painting in the snow on the castle itself; firstly on the basic parts, then onto the more obscure/hidden parts.


Fig06

- After I'm done with the snow painting I should refine the atmosphere and light. From the very beginning I don't like that the original plate is so uniformly lit, so I want to change that.

BASIC STEPS

As I told you before, everything begins with the preparation of our working area. In this case we are going for a cold atmosphere, yet not too overcast, so we must do a series of adjustments, amongst which will involve reducing the contrast and desaturating and moving the hues towards colder values, like cyan and blue.

Depending on your base image, it might take some time to create the proper feel so have patience and experiment with various adjustment layers. There's no recipe for this, but I'll try to point out the most important changes that you should make:

1 Reduce the Saturation and Contrast

This is usually done with a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer; in our case I've used -26 for Saturation (see **Fig02**) and I've also slightly increased the brightness. You can also use this layer to shift the hues a little, but don't go too wild – a plus/minus 4 maximum will do! As for reducing the contrast, there are tonnes of ways of doing this, amongst which using a Curves adjustment layer (as I showed you last month), using a brightness/contrast layer and reducing the contrast (not as accurate as Levels/Curves), using layer transitions, and so on (please see last month's tutorial part of this series which will explain and detail most of this for you!) (**Fig02**)


Fig07

2 Move the Hues Towards Colder Values
This is generally done with a Color Balance adjustment layer using a combination of Cyan/Blue sliders where needed. The amount and side depends on the hues of your base image. In **Fig03** you can see my values for the shadow part. Note that the values are quite small, but they produce very visible effects so don't go too wild. Also note that while this effect is applied to the entire image; it alters the hue by keeping the contrast with its neighbours, which means that for low values the effect is subtle and suitable for in-detail hue changes. Don't forget that if you have more areas which need different adjustments you can use several layers and paint into their mask! (**Fig03**)

3 Change the Overall Mood with a Curves Adjustment Layer.
Just like before, we will use the red channel to pull levels towards Cyan. Some people prefer to use just Color Balance, whilst others will tell you anything but Curves is wrong! However, as I told you last month, I have found that using both (with smaller intensities) produces much better results. In the end, it doesn't matter what tool you use as long as you produce good results, so feel free to experiment! (**Fig04**)


Fig08

After applying all the changes I ended up with what you can see in **Fig05**. It doesn't seem very "cold", but that's just because there's a lot of greenery in the scene which affects the overall mood. However, if you look at the original image you'll see the difference!

CHANGING THE BACKGROUND

Luckily for us, the original image has a clear sky so changing the background should be pretty easy! First of all, find a nice mountain stock image that suits the image and also which doesn't load the image too much. We already have a lot of positive space so we need as much sky as possible to compensate.

The general process of replacing the background involves the following steps: creating a mask for the new background layer, selecting the sky (and other areas you want to replace) from the original layer, and finally going into the mask, inverting the selection and filling it with black (which will render those parts invisible while keeping the rest of the layer). In **Fig06** you can see an example of how a mask looks.


Fig09

What is more or less difficult, depending on the base image, is the extraction of the area(s). There are several methods to do this:

- In our case, which is one of the simplest, we can simply use the Magic Wand tool to quickly select the sky.

- Moderate problems arrive when the area you want to replace has many ungrouped hue values, or, on the contrary, the whole image has shades of the same hue (think of sepia) and/or the separation edge contains many small details (like a tree, for instance). In this

case the most common method is channel extraction, generally using the Blue channel which has the best contrast (please see the advanced techniques in the last part of the series!).

- Lastly, the hardest cases are those which combine all of the above and, in addition, have also about the same brightness levels, or their distribution is random. These require hand work, combining the Lasso tool with painting into their mask.

Here's what I got after roughly replacing the background (**Fig07**).

ADJUSTING THE MIDDLE GROUND + FOREGROUND

Now that we have moved the castle it's time to adjust the rest of the elements to fit their new location, and we will start by recreating the left middle ground part, which was in the original photo behind the big tree in the foreground. Since we don't know exactly what was there, we have a lot of freedom for this step (unless we are given specific instructions, of course), so it's up to you to choose what to place in there. For this tutorial, I've decided to replace this part

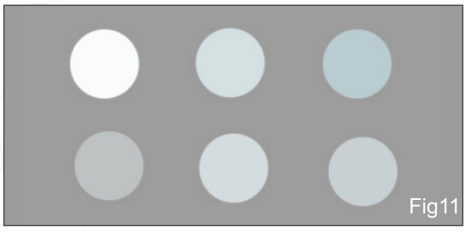

Fig11


Fig12


Fig10

with some pine trees, obviously covered by snow. The fastest way to do this is to find a nice stock photo; it doesn't have to be a full forest – 2 trees are enough! You can then duplicate them all around and modify their edges for variety. However, do pay attention to the scale! In this image, one of those front towers has the height of a 2-3 story building, so the pine trees should be scaled accordingly.

Once I did this, I felt the need to connect the group of trees with the distant mountain for more natural depth. This was done by adding a distant forest in-between and painting some mist over it to help integration. I've also enhanced the mist at this point by adding more details (**Fig08**).

It was then time to powder some snow over the 2 trees inside the castle, to match the rest of the scene. This was done with a hard round brush with a scattering effect. In the end, I've roughly painted some snow infront of the castle to have a better idea if I'm on the right path and to spot any flaws (**Fig09**).

Finally, we get to adjust the water in order to give it a frosty, cold look. What contributes the most to this effect is a drastic desaturation and some snow painting on the places where the lake meets the shore. Don't forget about reflections! Now that it's frosted in places it will reflect much more details than in the original (**Fig10**).

STARTING TO LOOK COLD...?

One thing that I don't like at this point, which is a heritage from the original photo, is the fact that the whole image is quite uniformly lit. There's nothing wrong with that, in terms of realism, but since the subject is so big and centred the eye gets lost in the image. One way to correct this, at least partially, is to create a gradually increasing brightness from left to right, but we'll address this later.


Fig13



PAINTING THE SNOW

At last, we get to take care of our castle, too. For some, this might prove a boring step because it involves a lot of thinking and detail painting. You have to go in and check every spot where snow would naturally fall. A high quality original will help the process a lot. When painting snow use a rough brush to create irregular shapes. Choose two colours; one for the regular snow (a white) and one for the shadowed parts (a grey or a slightly blue-tinted white). Painting snow involves working alternatively with these two colours.

In **Fig11** you can see a suggested palette for painting snow and ice with realistic shades (not too saturated).

Begin by adding snow on the edges and small parts where the snow would naturally fall. Then move onto the roofs and bigger areas (always do this afterwards because it will be easier to spot details before you do it). The hardest part of this process is to think about how the snow would actually look on the structure and not just to mindlessly spray it everywhere. If in doubt, reference photos will help! Don't be ashamed to type 'castle in winter' into Google and look at some photos.



Don't forget to paint in at least 1.5 times higher resolution - double resolution is recommended! Here's a close-up of the painting, in **Fig12**.
In the end, this is what I got (**Fig13**).

REFINING THE ATMOSPHERE

Finally, when we have everything ready, it's time to create that gradual transition I was talking about. Using two Levels adjustment layers – one that makes everything darker and one that makes everything brighter – I've painted in (using their mask) shadows and highlights to break the monotony and make the image more interesting – darker to the left, brighter to the right. I've also moved the highlights a little towards yellow to match the sun's natural colour for this kind of setting. In the end, this is what I got (**Fig14**).

I hope this has been helpful! See you in the next part of the series!

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"DINOSAURS WERE ONCE JUST AS DISTINCT FROM SPECIES TO SPECIES AS REPTILES AND BIRDS REMAIN TODAY..."



CREATURE DESIGN 101



PART 1: MARCH ISSUE 027

Starting Base for Your Designs: Reference Library

PART 2: APRIL ISSUE 028

The Next Step Into Imaginary Creature Anatomy

PART 3: MAY ISSUE 029

Design Process, Bone Structure & Skin Texture

PART 4: JUNE ISSUE 030

Head Design, Eyes and Construction of the Mouth

PART 5: JULY ISSUE 031

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Colours, Patterns and Final Renderings

CREATURE DESIGN 101

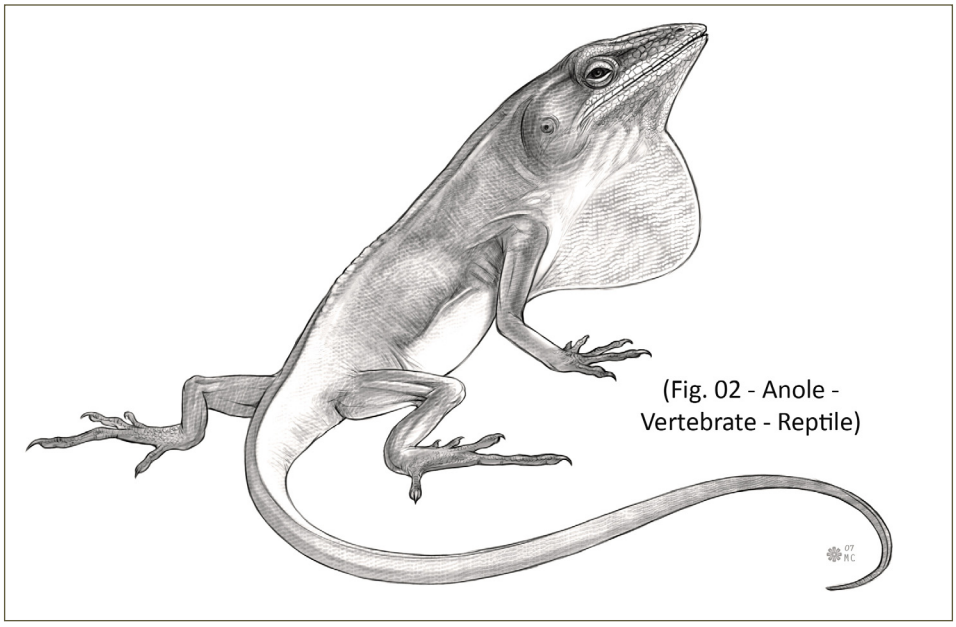
PART 1 – REFERENCE LIBRARY


(Fig. 01 - Brachiosaurus - Vertebrate - Dinosaur)

THE SERIES

Over the course of this series what I'll be discussing is a huge array of information and a breakdown in the construction of conceptual design with regard to creatures. All areas of creature design will be touched upon, providing you with the necessary information to create your own unique concepts from scratch. This series is going to be set up not as a step-by-step tutorial, but as a much more informative guide into the philosophy behind the make-up of an imaginary creature. Each lesson will touch upon a specific important aspect in what makes a great creature over just your average creature. I'll even provide a little advice on what to stay away from, in order to steer clear of what makes a creature a bad design or just dull in general.

Over this six-part lesson, you'll gradually obtain a reference library stretching from the basics in animal anatomy to much more complex ways of exploring what is actually possible and plausible, or what would be considered thinking "outside the box". There really are no limits to what is considered a conceptual creature, there are only distinctions between naturalistic designs (which are generally more plausible designs based upon rules) and what would be considered alien or even magical creatures (which are endless in the limitation of ideas).


(Fig. 02 - Anole - Vertebrate - Reptile)

INTRODUCTION

What we're going to cover here are the basics for all creature design, discussing relative anatomy to that of Mammals, Fish, Insects, Dinosaurs, Vertebrates and Invertebrates. I'll be referencing some of the families of existing animals as well as extinct species and the relationship of varying sizes, from something so small as an organism to that of a Sauropod or Giant Whale, and how they all fit into designing an imaginary creature. It's important that we understand how animals move, eat, breathe and live and why they do these things each in their own distinct manner.

The reason "why" is geared to the specific breakdown of each species concerning its size, bone structure and its diet. The diet of an animal largely makes up the construction of its

mouth and the reasons for other important parts of its anatomy. In addition to these points, I'll make some small references on how easy it can be to change areas of what we easily identify with or connect with as an earth based animal in order to call it a "creature". This will end Part 1 and will set up the lesson for Part 2.

A RELATION TO REAL WORLD LIFE FORMS

Something you can always use to your advantage when creating and designing a concept is to gather resources and information from related subject matter that actually exists. If you can relate a conceptual design to something in our world it will make a connection to the viewer, and making a connection to an outside party without explanation through the use of words is the key objective. So when you think of some great creatures you've seen in games, movies or comics, try to figure out what it is within that design that is capturing your attention in terms of what it relates to, to you.

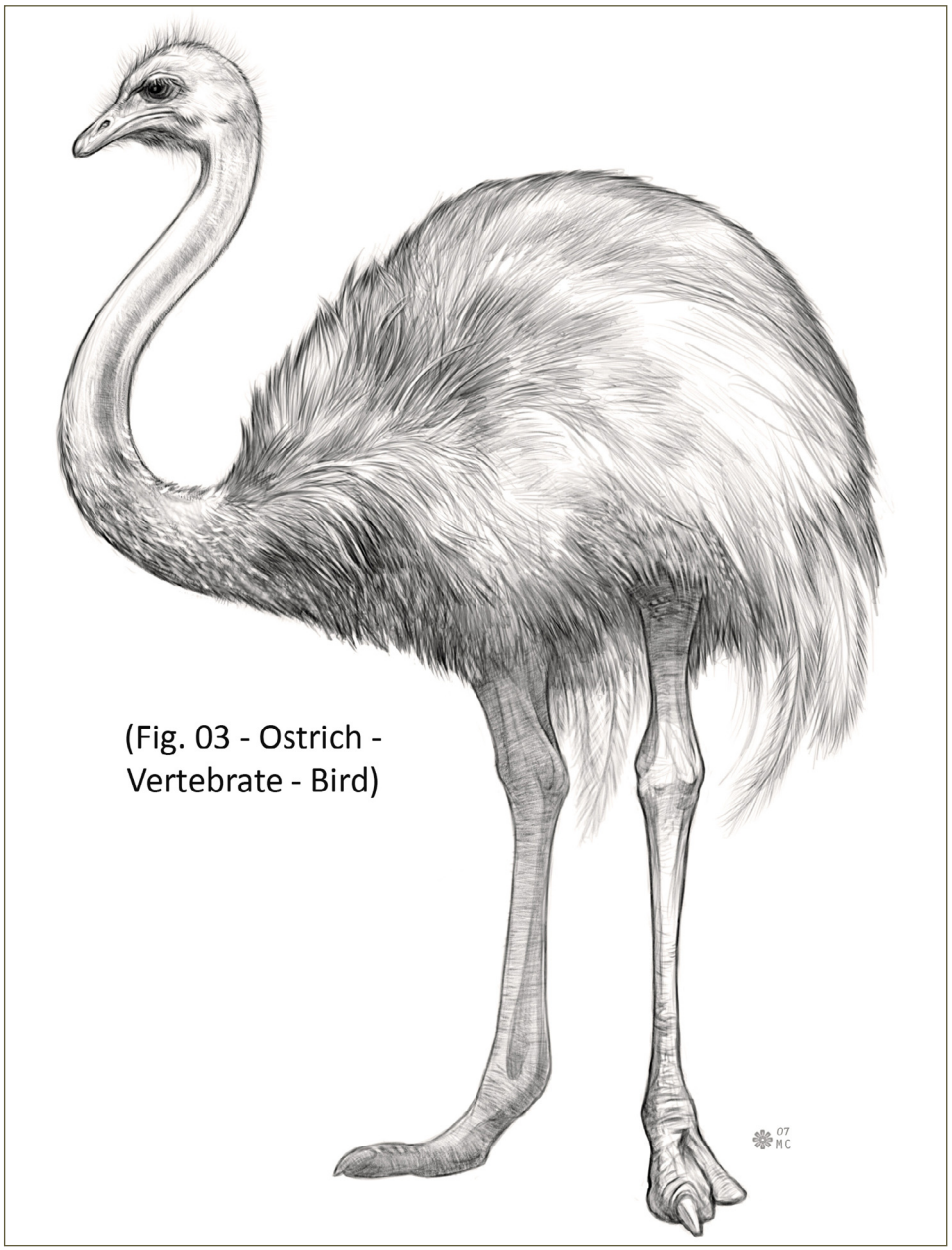
Can you think of an animal within this world that you see somewhere in those designs? Even if it's not always apparent, which it doesn't need to be, all creature designs come from a mix and match of existing biology. Whether it be the biological make-up of a tiny flea or the structure of a massive Sauropod (**Fig01** - Brachiosaurus - Vertebrate - Dinosaur), all creature designs are made up of what an artist has researched and studied in life and history.

The Brachiosaurus in Fig01 fits within the quadruped category; it is a dinosaur from the Genus Sauropod, a group of lizard-hipped dinosaurs that were of the largest living land animals in history. They were herbivores, which means animals who feed on vegetation and plants, not meat. They, along with all dinosaurs, laid eggs, which makes them relatives of reptiles as well as birds. Dinosaurs lived both on land and in the water; they were herbivores, omnivores, scavengers and carnivores. There were bipeds, quadrupeds and winged dinosaurs, as well as water-based species which all ranged from predators to prey.

Descendants of the largest of all land animals, lizards, still roam the earth today (**Fig02** - Anole - Vertebrate - Reptile). They fall under their own phylum due to evolution and the vast differences in distinct orders of reptiles, ranging from turtles to snakes, lizards and crocodiles. Reptiles can be herbivores, carnivores, scavengers and omnivores, as well. The similarities between reptiles and dinosaurs are scaled skin types, the construction of their skeletons, tails, teeth, ear construction and eyes. Dinosaurs were once just as distinct from species to species as reptiles and birds remain today. Skin type and blood temperature are two large characteristics that link lizards and other similar reptiles back to their dinosaur ancestors. Reptiles are cold blooded, which means they rely on the temperature of their surroundings to either heat or cool their body. If it's cold, they will usually be very sluggish, which is why most reptiles will often "sun" themselves to warm their bodies up.

DISCUSSING SPECIES

There are literally millions of different species on earth alone. You can break these down into what type of habitats they live in, such as water based or land based, and then even separating

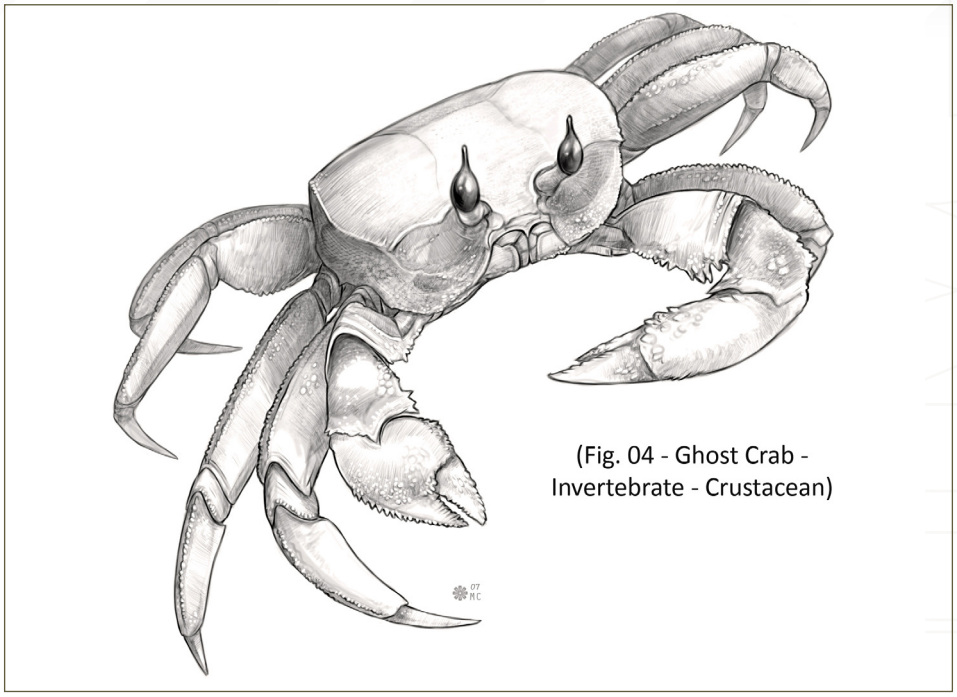


(Fig. 03 - Ostrich - Vertebrate - Bird)

those that fly and others than live below ground or above ground in trees, for extended periods of time. If you stick to land based animals, for the moment, and study the biological design of their bodies, they can range from limbless animals like gastropods and annelids, to bipeds, tetrapods, quadrupeds and arthropods. Most bipedal animals without the inclusion of humans consist of a very small number of species, such as birds (**Fig03**) or extinct dinosaurs.

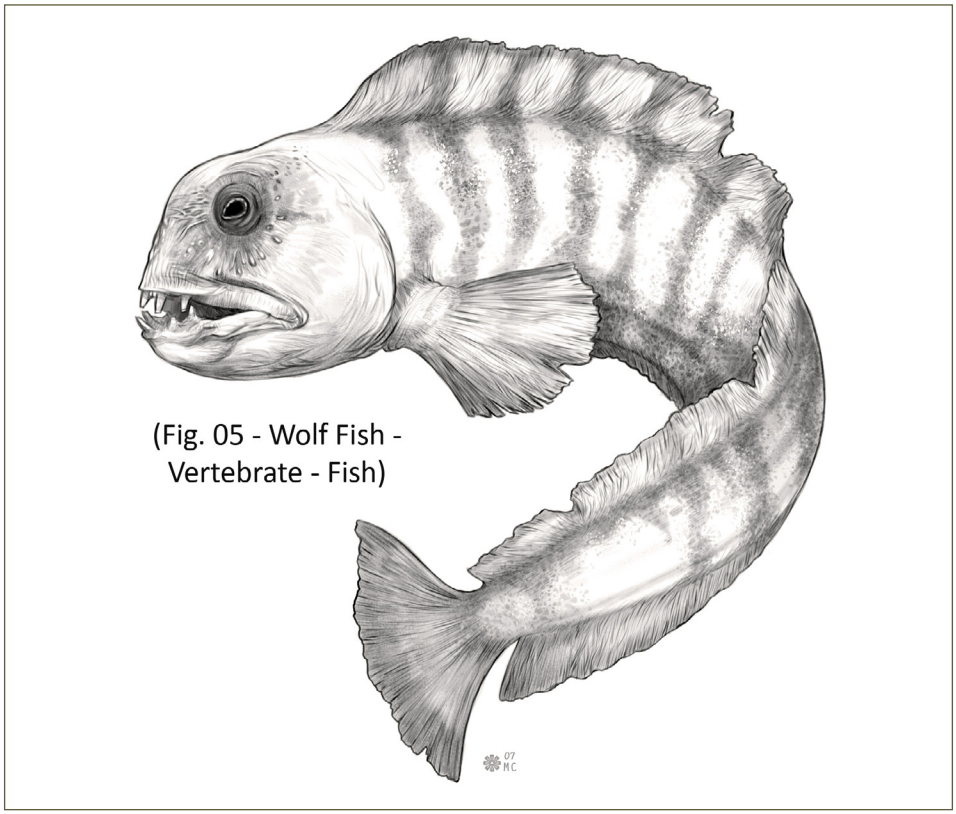
The Ostrich (**Fig03** - Ostrich - Vertebrate - Bird) is the largest living land bird which is bipedal; they fall under the genus, Struthio. Though they are the only living species of their family and genus, they share the same order to that of emus and kiwis, or other large flightless birds (ratites), most of which are now extinct. Birds can be carnivorous, herbivores and scavengers, or omnivores.

There are approximately nine-thousand species of bird, which range from flightless birds to migratory birds, and birds of prey and water based species, which contain webbed feet and waterproof plumage.



(Fig. 04 - Ghost Crab - Invertebrate - Crustacean)

There are a small number of biped mammals, but for the most part mammals fall under the quadruped and tetrapod group. Birds are considered bipeds because they contain two actual legs, but they do in fact fall under the tetrapod category because their wings count as four limbs, even though they are not used for walking. Snakes, as well, once had legs, but they are now vestigial just as some species of birds, so they fall under the category of tetrapods. In addition, arthropods make up a large range of species, including insects, crustaceans, arachnids and myriapods. Once again, if you delve further into each class of species you can take a look at crustaceans, which are considered by definition to be any aquatic group of hard-shelled arthropods, like crabs, lobster, shrimp and barnacles (**Fig04**).

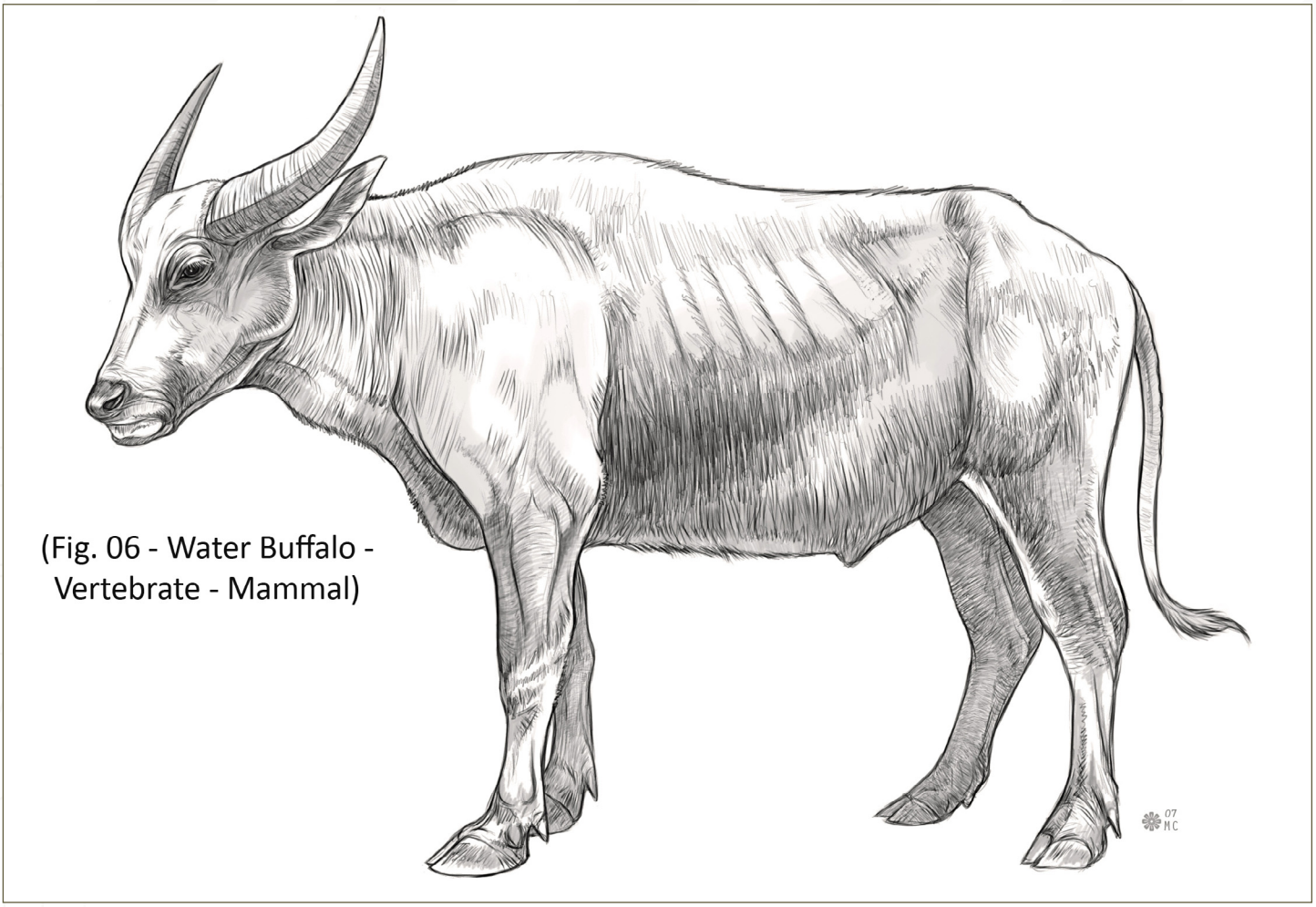


(Fig. 05 - Wolf Fish - Vertebrate - Fish)

Crabs (**Fig04 -** Ghost Crab - Invertebrate - Crustacean) are arthropods which fall under the category of crustaceans. They have 4 pairs of walking legs and 2 pinching limbs. Arthropods generally fit within any species containing 4 pairs of limbs or more, and fall under the category of invertebrates. They are characterised by segmented bodies, jointed limbs and hard exoskeletons protecting their inner organs. This species fits within the largest phylum of all animals. Invertebrates make up approximately 97% of the Earth's entire species!

A BREAKDOWN IN TAXONOMY

In order to understand what is possible when creating your own designs, you should equip yourself with the knowledge and understanding



(Fig. 06 - Water Buffalo - Vertebrate - Mammal)

of the entire animal kingdom. You may even include flora such as trees, bushes, plants and flowers, since they are living organisms, but creature designs will chiefly consist of the animal kingdom and flora would follow as a separate category of reference. There is an organisation to all living things which includes the Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus and Species. This kind of pyramid breakdown was created by scientists and is known as taxonomy. It's used as a way to classify and categorise the different types of species so that you may trace their genetic evolutionary roots back to their origins.

The Kingdom consists of all living things that have a need to feed on organic matter. A Phylum consists of animals that share the same body plan which would be broken up into divisions of vertebrates (animals with a backbone) and invertebrates (animals without a backbone or spinal column). Most of the world's species consist largely of invertebrates. A Class consists of all animals that fall within a specific design and are alike in more ways than one. The five most well-known classes of vertebrates are mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians, followed by the invertebrates including insects, crustaceans and arachnids (**Fig05**).

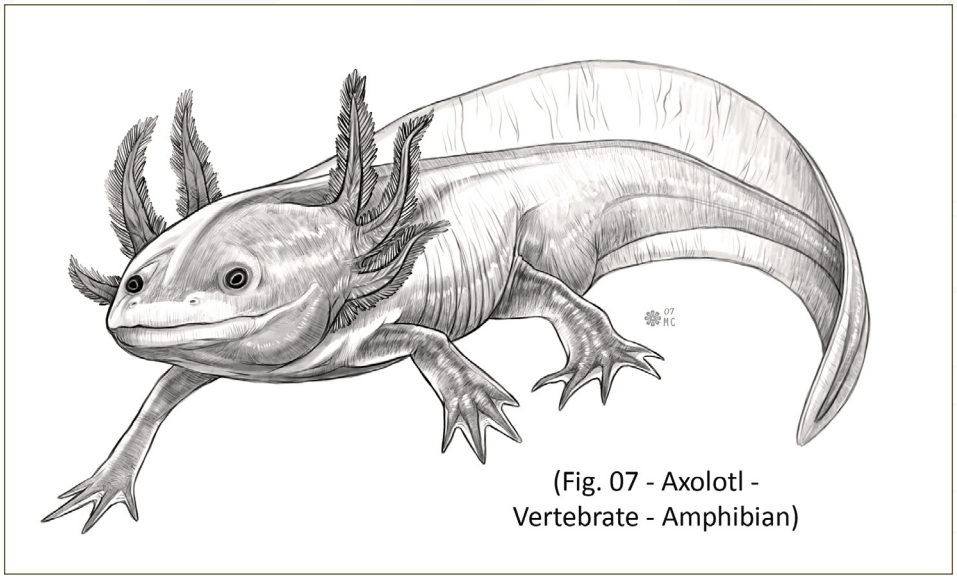
Fish (**Fig05** - Wolf Fish - Vertebrate - Fish) are cold-blooded aquatic vertebrates covered in various types of scales. They range from fresh water to salt water and deep sea species. They are characterised by the fact that they live in water through the use of gills, breathing oxygen through form of filtration. They are not considered biped or quadruped, nor are they tetrapods, but they use pairs of fins – if any – and finned tails to move through the water. The term 'fish' can stretch from sharks to rays and even seahorses! There are some exceptions to the cold-blooded character trait, concerning certain species of shark, tuna or swordfish that can raise their body temperature.

An Order is the classification of animals more closely related in terms of varying families with similar physical attributes. An example of this would be the order of Rodentia (Rodents), including species such as Mice, Beaver, Rats, Squirrel, Moles and even Porcupine.

The Family division of animals pertains to a closer related group defined by similar physical traits in design, such as Felines, which would include Lions, Tigers, Cheetah and even house cats. A genus would then break the family down into categories of species with similar and common characteristics. An example of a genus would be "mice", including all the varying species of mice but not including species that fit

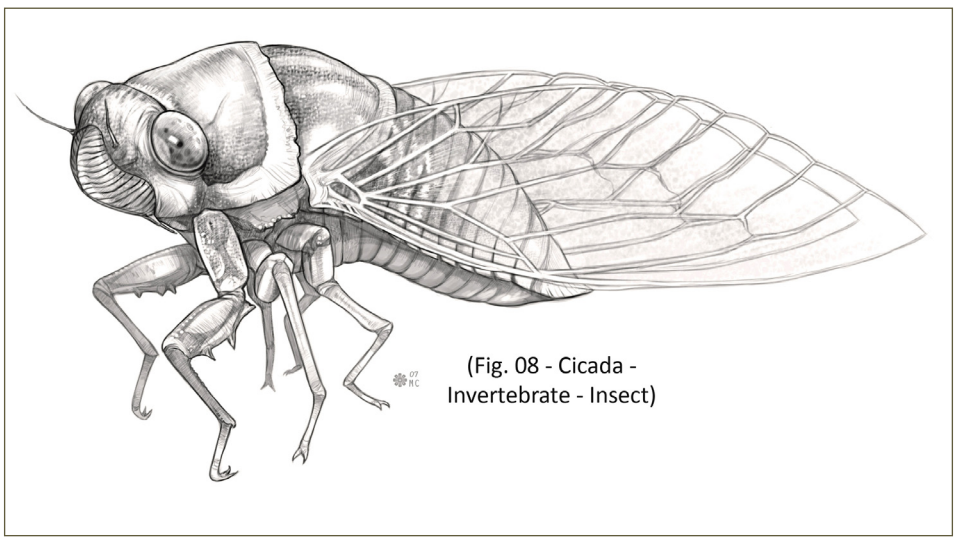
within the same Order, as mentioned above like rats. A rat, although similar in appearance to a mouse, would fit within its own genus because there are a certain amount of differences from one rat to the next which would define a species. A Species is the specific animal itself of which there can be vast numbers of this animal but they are, for the most part, identical in every way and considered a group. So to give you a quick breakdown of one specific Phylum, I'll provide you with the breakdown of a Water Buffalo. It would fit under the Phylum: Vertebrate, under the Class: Mammal, the Order: Artiodactyla, the Family: Bovidae, it's Genus: Bubalus and then a specific species of Buffalo, for example, would the Wild Asian Water Buffalo (**Fig06**).

Water Buffalo (**Fig06** - Water Buffalo - Vertebrate - Mammal) are quadruped mammals falling under the Bovid Family, which consists of Goat, Sheep, Gazelle, Bison and Antelope, which are all hoofed mammals. They are usually distinct from deer, moose and elk, due to the distinction of unbranched horns. Water Buffalo spend most of their time wallowing in small bodies of water and feeding on vegetation, grass, leaves and so on. Although herbivores do not eat meat, they are still dangerous when threatened. Herbivorous mammals use large flat molars for grinding vegetation and rigid incisors used for shearing and stripping the vegetation (**Fig07**).



(Fig. 07 - Axolotl - Vertebrate - Amphibian)

Cold blooded vertebrates (**Fig07** - Axolotl -Vertebrate - Amphibian) are characterised by webbed appendages and digits, an adapted second set of clear eyelids for seeing underwater, and gills in some cases. Amphibians range from frogs, to newts, salamanders, toads and caecilians. They are capable of living both below and above water with both swimming and terrestrial traits. Usually amphibians have moist skin and reproduce in, or near, bodies of water and moist terrain through the laying of eggs. Some species, like the Axolotl, have adapted external gills which stay with them through adulthood for low oxygen based water streams. The larvae of most amphibians are usually aquatic, spending the first portion of their lives under water breathing through the use of gills.

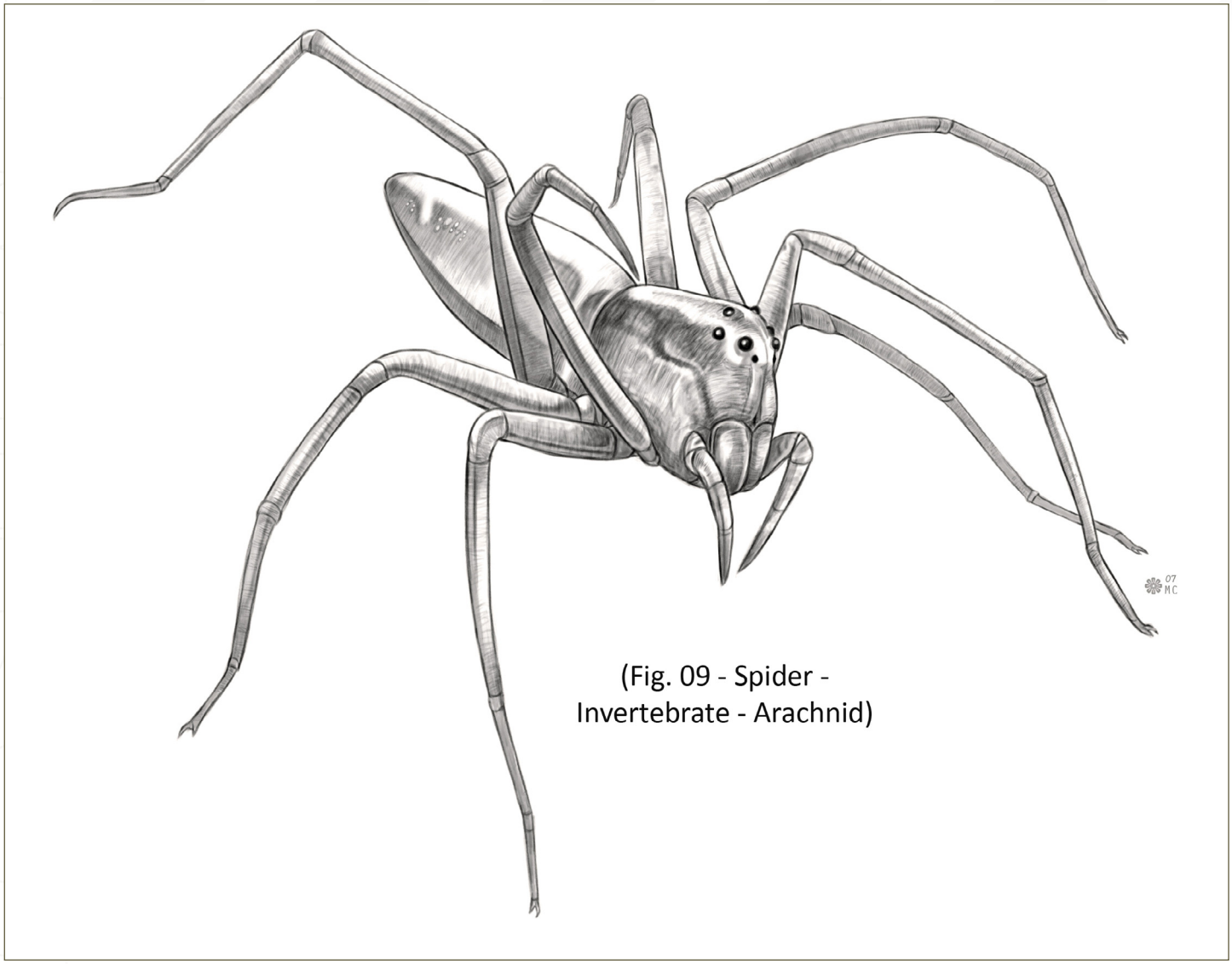


(Fig. 08 - Cicada - Invertebrate - Insect)

VERTEBRATES AND INVERTEBRATES

When you're looking for a starting point in creature design, the main aspect that should first be defined is what category it will fall under. Will it have a backbone or will it be a more free-roaming design with less limitations? Invertebrates allow for more possibilities because they – in reality – consist of numerous limbs, or in cases of aquatic invertebrates they open up the option to create some really alien or abstract-like designs. If you choose to base your design around a Vertebrate, there are more rules to follow. You can take almost any example of a vertebrate animal and they all contain a similar bone structure even if it's a biped or a quadruped. In reality, there are no true species of mammals or vertebrates with more than four limbs. However, keep in mind when conceptualising a design that you do not have to limit yourself to this rule. If you choose to provide your vertebrate creature with six, eight or even twenty limbs, you just need to account for the extra muscles and bones included and how they will attach to the biological structure underneath the skin (**Fig08**).

Insects (**Fig08** - Cicada - Invertebrate - Insect) are capable of so many forms, from flying insects to underground dwelling insects to water based insects. They contain multiple pairs



(Fig. 09 - Spider - Invertebrate - Arachnid)

of limbs, segmented bodies, exoskeletons, stingers, antenna, pinchers and wings of all types. Insects can contain poisonous glands, such as a honeybee or a giant centipede. Insects are generally small but they usually work in large colonies, making up for their size. They can be carnivorous as well as herbivores, and some species of butterfly feed on nectar from plants, pollen, tree sap, rotting fruit, dissolved minerals in the ground, and even dung! They make up the most diverse group of animals on earth with over a million species! (**Fig09**)

Spiders (**Fig09** - Spider - Invertebrate - Arachnid) are similar to insects; they contain numerous pairs of limbs – usually 4 pairs of jointed legs. Mostly terrestrial, they are comprised of spiders, scorpions, ticks, mites and harvestmen. Spiders are capable of spinning webs and injecting poison through large mandibles. The biggest distinction between insects and arachnids is that insects generally have 6, 3 or more than 6 pairs of legs. Arachnids have 4 actual pairs of legs and usually 2 adapted pairs for feeding, defence and sensory perception. Spiders feed by sucking the liquid out of their prey instead of feeding on chunks of the body. They also contain multiple sets of eyes, unlike most insects, and they do not contain antenna or wings.

BONES AND JOINTS

You don't need to be an expert, trust me; if you had to memorise or know the name of every bone in the skeleton of an animal it would take a very long time! Not only that, but if you take into account all the different species and variations of muscles and bones between each class of mammals alone, you'd be studying bones and muscles forever! You just need to understand the basic dominate portions of the skeleton, how the muscles wrap around those areas, and how they bend during movement. You can take a look at bipeds and quadrupeds or tetrapods and see that the most dominate bones are a constant from one animal to the next, but they're just slightly altered in size or where they are placed. For example, if you look at the bone structure of an extinct dinosaur, like a Sauropod, compared to a modern day animal, like a Giraffe, there are still a lot of similarities – and even similarities from that to those in the human skeleton!

The most dominate portions of any skeleton consist of the Skull (both the cranium and the mandible), Vertebrae (including the cervical, thoracic, lumbar, sacrum and the caudal or coccyx), Scapula, Humerus, Sternum, Olecranon, Ulna, Carpus, Metacarpus, Phalanges, Rib Cage, Pelvis, Femur, Patella, Tibia, Fibula, Calcaneus, Tarsus and Metatarsus. These are essentially just the Skull, Neck and Back Bones, Tail bone, Shoulder Blade, Arm, Elbow, Forearm, Knee, Wrist, Fingers, Ribs, Hipbone, Thigh, Leg and the Ankle. The reason these areas are important is because they are used the most during any type of movement, whether it be eating, walking, jumping, laying down or standing up. In short, if you want your creature to move in a believable way, learn how these joints and bones bend during different poses (**Fig10**).

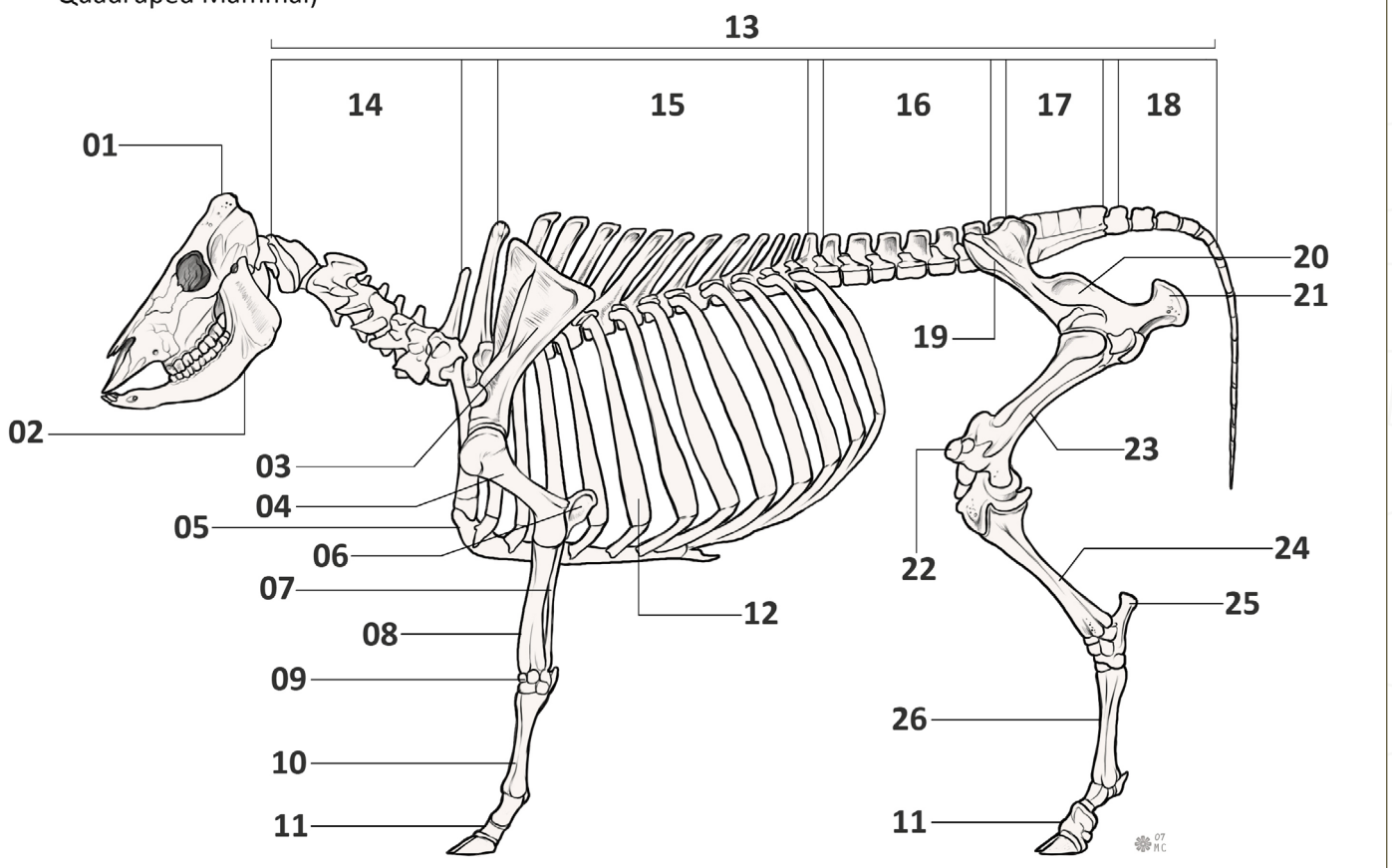
The Skeleton of a Quadruped Mammal (**Fig10**):

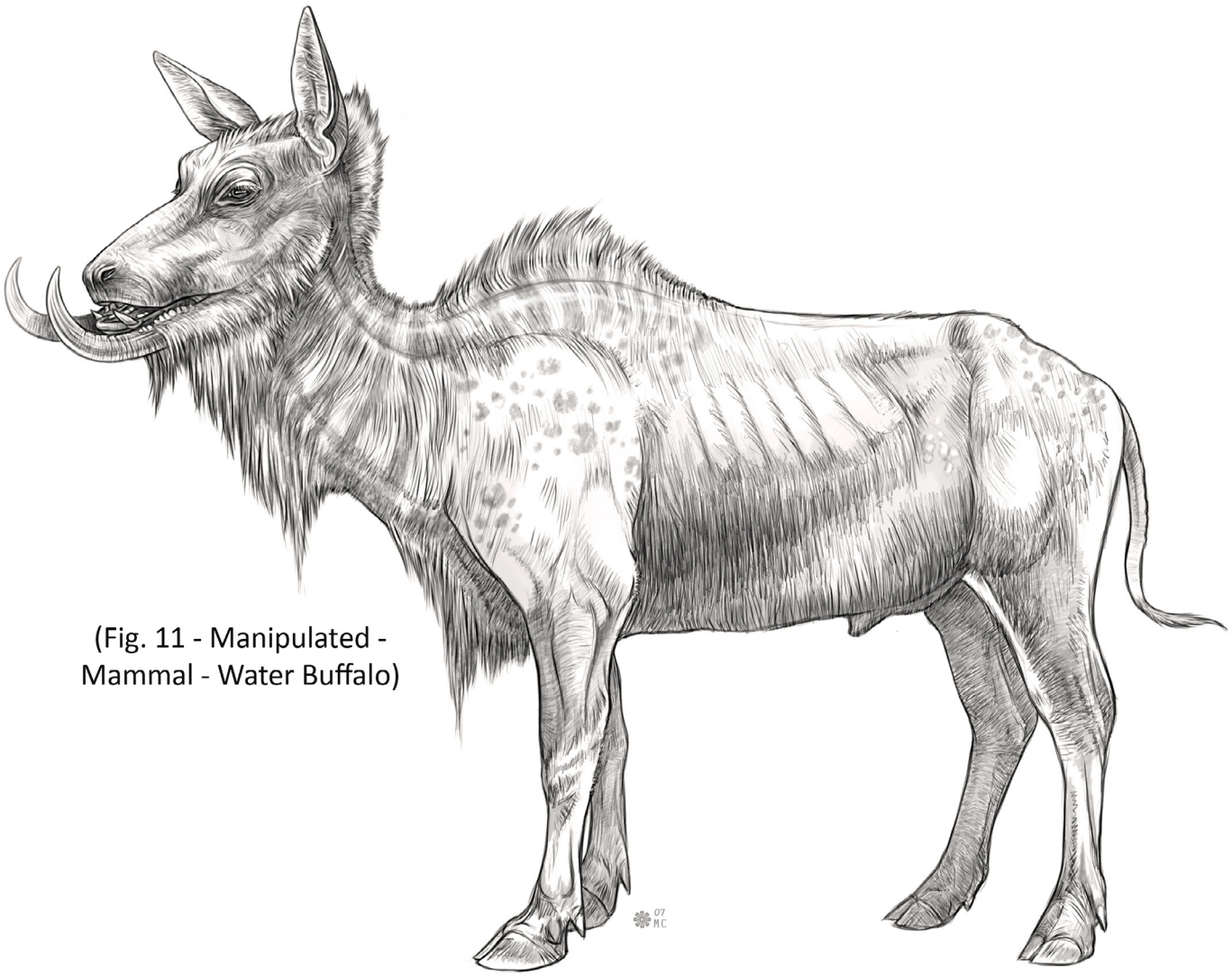
1: Skull
2: Mandible
3: Scapula
4: Humerus
5: Sternum
6: Olecranon
7: Ulna
8: Radius
9: Carpus
10: Metacarpus
11: Phalanges
12: Rib Cage
13: Vertebrae
14: Cervical
15: Thoracic
16: Lumbar
17: Sacral
18: Caudal
19: Tuber Coxae
20: Ilium
21: Tuber Ischii
22: Patella
23: Femur
24: Tibia
25: Tuber Calcaneus
26: Metatarsus

ADJUSTING EXISTING ANATOMY WITH PLAUSIBLE JUSTIFICATIONS

A starting point for testing the waters, in regard to all the written and visual information provided, would be to take the anatomy of any kind of animal and manipulate it, if only slightly. One I'm going to use in order to demonstrate ways to adjust anatomy, while keeping in mind the physical changes in its appearance, is a Water

(Fig. 10 - Skeleton of a Quadruped Mammal)





(Fig. 11 - Manipulated - Mammal - Water Buffalo)

Buffalo. I want to show you how you can change things like the length of the Cervical (Neck) or the height of it's Thoracic Curve on the Vertebrae (Dorsal back bones in the lower neck and upper back region). Some additions to the design, in the shape of its horns and perhaps a few adjustments to the Caudal (Tail) and the Ulna (Forearm), Femur (Thigh) and Tibia (Leg Bones) (**Fig11** - Manipulated - Mammal - Water Buffalo).

I wanted to show you how adjusting various appendages and characteristic features of an existing animal can create what would be considered a naturalistic creature. I lengthened both the neck, the forearm and hind leg while taking away some of the weight in the stomach region. I also slightly adjusted the shoulder hump or dorsal vertebrae portion near the upper back, while adding extended tufts of hair to its mane in the neck, chest and back. Other areas that were changed included inverting the ears, removing the horns and extending the mandible to be utilised as tusks for foraging during snow seasons to find vegetation and other food sources. These extended tusks are also used during mating battles and defence from predators. In addition to physical changes, some stripes and patterns were made to the fur. These variations on the anatomy of the original Water Buffalo really make a big difference in the overall nature behind the habits of this creature.

In order for it to feed after the additional length made to its legs, it was necessary to lengthen the neck. Finally, for the tusks to make sense, the addition of heavier fur was added to portions of the coat so it can survive lower temperatures. This can all be pushed further and played around with more, but this is where we'll leave off for now. Check back in for Part 02 for a continuation of Creature Design 101.

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MAKING OF CATHÉDRALE



"A MATTE PAINTING IS A WORK THAT DEMANDS GREAT PATIENCE, TIME AND DEDICATION. IT ALLOWS US TO CREATE IMAGES THAT DON'T EXIST AND WHICH CAN BE QUITE INSPIRATIONAL..."

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MAKING OF CATHÉDRALE

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INTRODUCTION

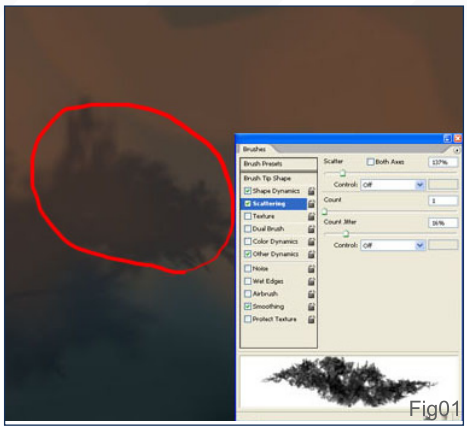
This picture was a research piece for a feature-length 3d movie, People of the Elephant. This film tells the story mentioned in a holy book, taking place between the year 570 and 571, of our time. It tells the story of a King in the south of Arabia who took 60,000 troops and 13 elephants, and set his army to destroy the holy city of Mecca. All of this was in the purpose of re-routing the pilgrimage and commerce of the Arabs towards San'a, the capital of Yemen, where he built a magnificent Cathedral. When the King gave the order to attack, a cloud of birds appeared in the sky. The birds stoned the aggressors with thousands of little stones and thus defeated the troops of the Yemen King. (Production by Sigma Technologies, Morocco)

THE BRIEF

The purpose of the brief was to make a large view of the cathedral during the night-time, and the whole scene was to be bathed in moonlight.

SKETCHES

At first, I chose a landscape format of 5906 by 2835 pixels as a basis for the matte painting.


Fig01

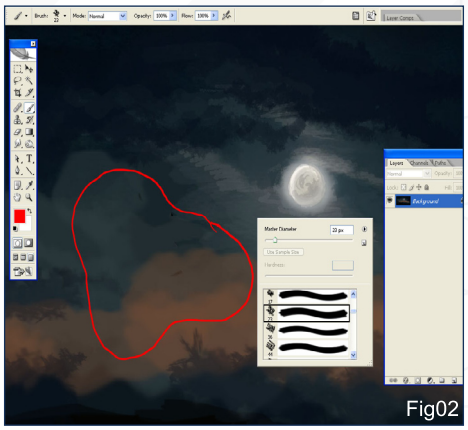

Fig02


Fig03


Fig04

I always work in a large format to have more detail, which is, at the same time, perfect for an impression on a proposal. I made a quick sketch using several different brushes. These brushes were either customised by me, made from tutorials, or were just already existing in Photoshop. All the while I was using a graphics tablet, which is necessary for this kind of precise work (sketching and matte painting).

BACKGROUND

So, I started with the sky, concentrating especially on the clouds, with the brush opacity at 50% (**Fig01**). Afterwards, I painted the ground with a dark colour, followed by the moon and finally the cathedral, with a brush opacity of 50% to build up different layers of colour. I then lit up the centre of the picture so that the eye of the spectator would be attracted to the moon and the cathedral (**Fig02**). To add volume and value, I put touches of light coloured paint on the cathedral and the clouds. With small brush touches, I also painted in the houses, and I created a fog to add atmosphere to the whole scene. And finally, to reinforce the composition, I drew a rock in the foreground of the scene, on one side, to achieve some depth and to make it more dynamic (**Fig03**). Based on the sketch, I then started the matte painting.

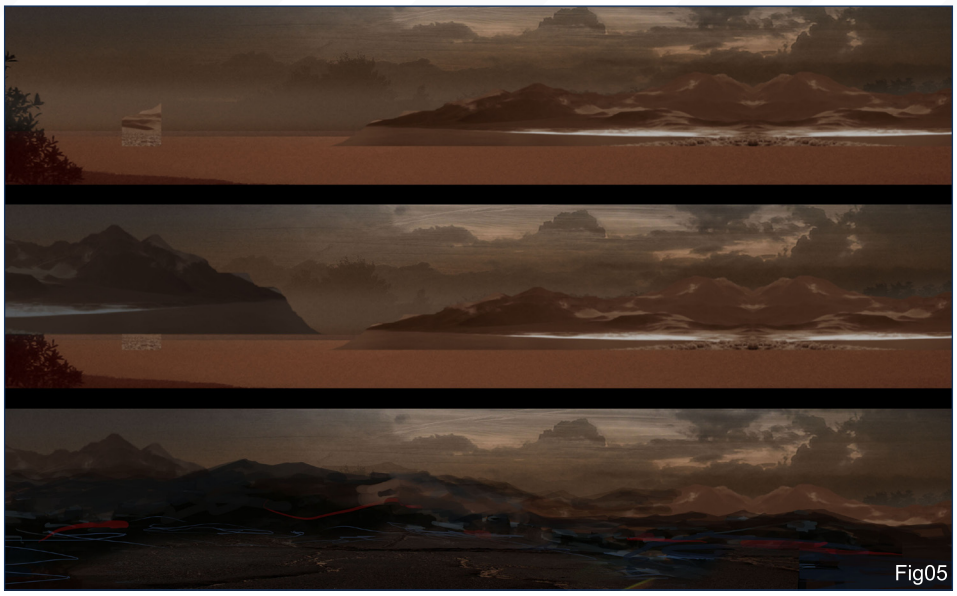

Fig05


Fig06

MATTE PAINTING

Before and during the work on this particular matte painting, I made some research and assembled some documents (either pictures gathered on the Internet or photographs taken by myself with my camera). The image obviously had to be of a high quality and resolution (between 3000 to 4000 pixels) for a top quality result.

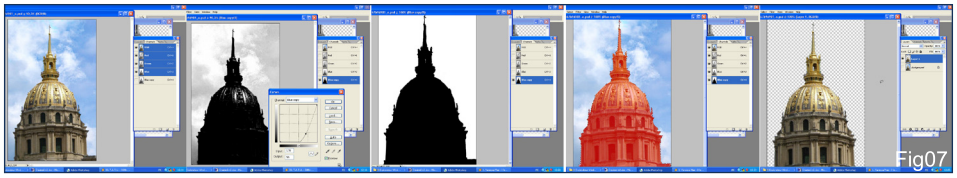

Fig07


Fig08

BACKGROUND

I started with a dark blue background (remember the scene is nocturnal). After choosing three skies, I changed them into greyscale mode in order to have just one value. I set the first sky in Overlay mode, then added a transparent orange gradation from the bottom to the top with an opacity of 59%. I used orange to accentuate the presence of the sun and to warm up the background. Afterwards, I added a second sky, in Overlay mode again, with 62% opacity. Then came the third, and final, sky, again in Overlay mode. Finally, I added a line portraying the horizon, in an off-white/grey (**Fig04**).

GROUND

Changing the opacity of the brushes, I painted the ground and the mountains. I even integrated images of mountains and applied them as layers (Layer style; dark blue colour; Overlay mode; Opacity 59%) so that they became incorporated into the sky (**Fig05**).

THE MOON

I duplicated the layer of the moon and applied a Gaussian blur, before making it bigger, to give the resemblance of a halo around the moon. With the pipette tool, I took the colour of the moonlight and added strokes of paint on the clouds' edges. Finally, I enlarged the two layers of the moon to enhance the appearance of the cathedral (**Fig06**).

CATHEDRAL

To extract the background architecture, I worked with the alpha channels (**Fig07**). Sometimes I use the brush tool, click on the 'Q' key and then paint the surface that I want. Then I click on Q again to select the surface to have it switched. In another window, with all images carefully selected, I came up with the composition. To enlarge and decrease the sizes, I used the Transformation tool (Ctrl + T), changing them to grey to achieve more value (**Fig08**).

Afterwards, I integrated them into the original scene, adding then a little red colour with


Fig09


Fig10


Fig11


Fig12

the Color Balance option to make it more harmonious with the atmosphere of the scene (**Fig09**). I duplicated the same layer and darkened it with the Hue/Saturation tool, while applying the Overlay mode. On the same layer, I erased the luminous parts with the Airbrush Pen Opacity Flow. I added a yellow light on the windows and finally made a light fog on the cathedral, to add more focal depth.

CITY

I used the image of a city, with an Opacity of 47%, and on the mask layer I erased the borders with an eraser. After that, I applied a black Transparency gradient from the left to the right, in Overlay mode and at 64% Opacity. Finally, I added an orange colour to portray fires and smoke, to show that there are people living in the city (**Fig10**).

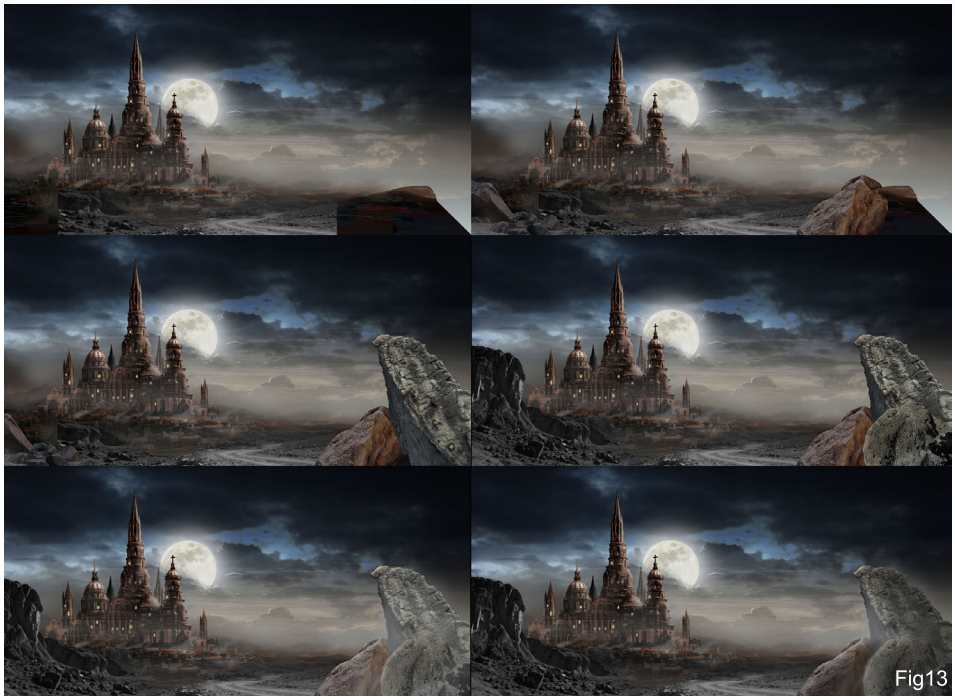
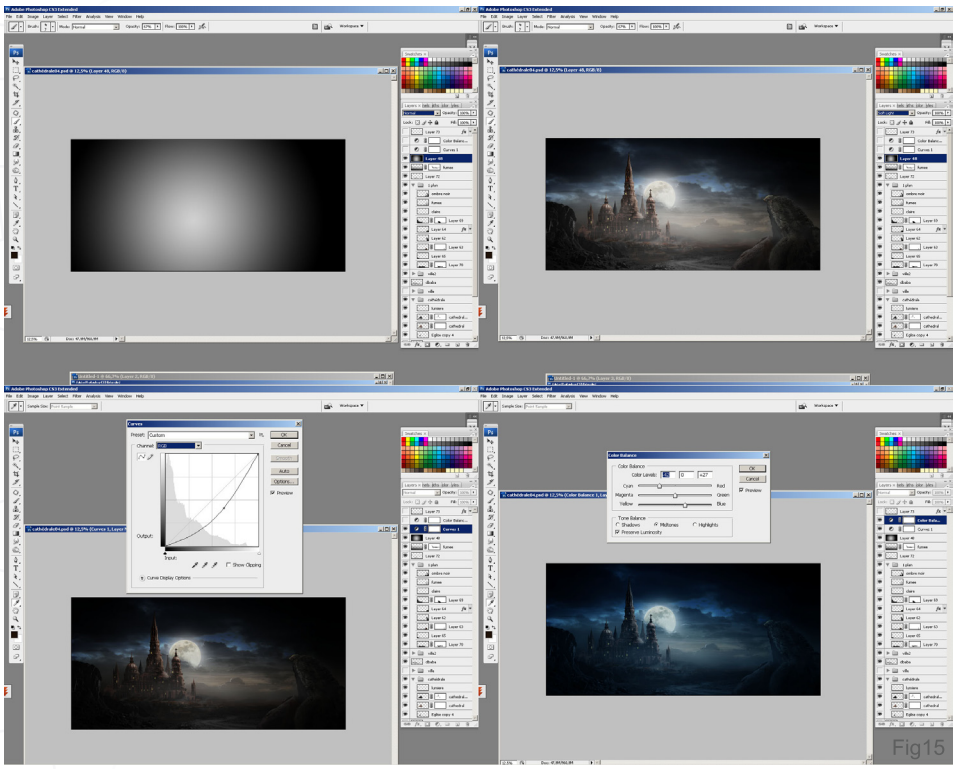

Fig13


Fig14


Fig15

FOG

To separate the cathedral from the background I applied a Transparency gradient from bottom to top, with a light grey colour (**Fig11**).

FIRST PLAN [LAYOUT]

After I selected the images, I extracted the rock in the background with Alpha Channels (**Fig12**) and then assembled the rocks. With each one, I used the Curves tool to make them correctly contrasted.

Finally, I darkened the image and put the fog onto the rocks on the right of the image (**Fig13**).

FINISHING TOUCH

On a new layer, I applied a Transparency gradient in black from bottom to top with a 44% Opacity. On another new layer, I made a Radial gradient with the Soft Light mode. I then added a fusion layer (curve) to the whole scene and darkened the image a little. Then, I added a Color Balance of Cyan -42 and Yellow +27 (Fig14).

FINAL IMAGE

The matte painting is a work that demands great patience, time and dedication. It allows us to create images that don't exist and which can be quite inspirational! (**Fig15**)

MAKING OF CATHÉDRALE

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